









MUSINGS  
ON  
THE BHAGWAD GITA



By

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Perform thou *dutious action*, action is better than  
inaction.

Even the body sojourn will fail if thou remain  
inactive.

Attaining poise in joy grief, profit loss, victory  
and defeat

Get ready for the fight, thus thou wilt not  
incur sin.

If killed in action to heaven, if victorious thou  
wilt enjoy the earth.

Therefore arise, Kuntiborn, and fight with  
resolution.

(*Bhagwad Gita, Ch. III-8, Ch. II-38, 37*)

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*By his grateful son*

**DEDICATED**

*to*

**BABU DULI CHAND**

*Who by his life of simplicity, self-abnegation, uprightness and devotion<sup>4)</sup> to God, and tender but vigilant watch over his children has subtly moulded their character along the path of virtue*



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- |    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| 1. | <i>Batwixt the two armies</i>   | 16 |
| 2. | <i>For those who deserve no grief thou grievest.<br/>And words of wisdom thou talkest;<br/>Over what evolveth and dissolveth ever,<br/>grieve not the wise.</i> | 42 |



## PREFACE

On September 23, 1930 while a dozen admirers of the late major B. D. Basu, I.M.S. (retired)—a great scholar—were watching his remains being consumed by the mighty Agni (fire) from their boats on the Ganges, a dear friend pointing to the corpse burning on the bank as the ultimate fate of this mortal coil, quietly stole away from me a promise to share my views of the Gita teaching with its other devotees by publishing a short commentary. The pages which follow have been written in fulfilment of that promise.

Ground was prepared for these pages early by a strange drama which I have been witnessing since my college days, namely, the care and assiduity with which human ambition ever seeks to skilfully direct all its gifts, to sneak into the favour of those who can help, secure the goodwill of rivals and others who can injure, and search out those who can sow the seeds of name around, behind a deceptive screen of straightforwardness and virtue. Its ardour cools down with surprising suddenness if the man is found to be useful no longer or proves harmless.

The main object of this acting has appeared to me to be satisfaction of feeding and adorning the human frame in a seductive halo of vanity and self-importance, amidst the gaze of admiring neighbours and associates. This human frame! which a mysterious Providence puts out of action without notice, terminating the sojourn and dashing to pieces all plans so carefully formed on



the basis of an enduring existence. Unconcerned, this Power makes a present of it to the mourners to be put on a stack of burning wood or interred in the ground and forgotten for ever.

Our hero when alive wants the crowd to idolise him for what he does for himself. But strange to say, the crowd reciprocates by feeling jealous of him for his good luck, and is willing to give him an abiding place in its heart *only* for substantial service rendered to it in a spirit of humility and self-abnegation *and not otherwise*.

In these pages an attempt has been made to emphasise the Gita solution of the amazing anomalies of human existence by a plain, heart to heart talk with the enquiring reader.

Sanskrit proper names and expressions have been transliterated as they are pronounced in conversation in northern India.

I thank Dr. Basu for publishing the book without remuneration which has enabled me to keep down its price; and consenting to hand over the balance of the proceeds after deducting expenses of printing and sale, to organisations engaged in uplift of the depressed classes and promotion of communal harmony.

Lastly I owe an apology to my friends who contrary to expectation had to wait for the book for the long period of ten months that it has taken to pass through the press for want of expert proof reading.

NEHAL CHAND VAISH

Allahabad  
9, Edmonstone Road  
October 13, 1931

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

### CHAPTER I

#### Dejection of Arjun

Page 1-31

Cause of war—1. Pandava generals—6. Kuru generals—7. Duryodhan's estimate of the two armies—8. Kuru conches—11. Pandava conches—11. Conch-effect on the Kurus—13. Arjun desires to survey the Kuru army—13. Between the two armies—16. The scene—16. Arjun's breakdown, erroneous estimate of Kuru strength—17. Delusion in kin—22. How it arose—24. Consequences of family destruction—27. Arjun's specious argument—28. Self-righteous speech—30.

### CHAPTER II

#### Yoga of Equanimity

Page 32-100

Krishna's condemnation of Arjun's dejection—32. Arjun's defence: (i) killing preceptors sinful—33, (ii) victory doubtful so slaughter sinful—36. Arjun's distress (mental state described)—37. The problem before Krishna—38. The situation—39. Krishna commences the teaching—41.

#### I. Sankhya Yoga.

Self eternal, body transient: temporal relations have an end, self is constant—41. Body chariot—43. Its function—45. Physical objects affect the body only, preserve poise—46. Grieve not for the perishing body, fight—47.

Nature of the self—49. Self and body relation—56. Self unaffected by elements—57. Nature in perpetual flux—grieve not for the change—59. The self a wonder—60. Righteous-war

Kshatriya's duty—60. Refusal to fight means disgrace—61. Two alternatives, call to arms—62. *Doctrine of Poise in action*—63. Summary of the teaching—63.

II. *Buddhi Yoga*: way to attain equanimity.

Introduction (i) man and Universe—65, (ii) this section based on Kath-Upanishad—69. Unique features of *Buddhi Yoga*—slight practice reduces fear, reason rooted in self—71. Limitations of fruit-regarding-activity—73. Karma-kanda portion of Veda leads to heaven only and not liberation—74. Non-fruit-regarding activity—the state of a God-knowing illumined, he rises beyond the three gunas with which the Karma-kanda portion deals—76. Law of human action—80. Definition of *Yoga of equanimity*—81. Fruit-regarding action contrasted with self-less action—81. Supreme value of this *Yoga*—84. Conditions of attainment—85.

Arjun's question *re* marks of a *Yogi*—87. Krishna defines (a) stable understanding—87, (b) stable being—89—marks of a man of poised reason—89. Stable reason attained through sense-control, effect of past enjoyments—90. Power of the senses—91. Stable reason how attained—92. Analysis of mental action, how man falls—92. Peace through sense-mastery—95. Disquiet through sense-slavery—96. Conclusion—97. Stable reason illustrated by similes of (i) day and night—97, (ii) Ocean—98. Discussion formulated, identity with shloka 38 established—99. Both denote one Brahman state—100.

## CHAPTER III

### Karma Yoga or Yoga of Action

Page 101-182

Arjun's confusion between action and poised reason—101. Krishna explains—104. Non-actionness and renunciation—106. True Karma Yoga—109. Action without attachment—109. Dutious action—110—meaning of *Yajna*—110. Speech of the Crea-

tor: addressed to creation—113. Yajna—114, Devas—115, mutual service of men and Devas—118, mutual service of men *inter se*—120. Return of gifts to Devas—122. Measure of man's needs—123—discussion of five daily Yajnas—125. The wheel of the Universe—130—why the wheel revolves—131—man's place in the wheel—sense-reveller—132, self-reveller—134. Test of Duteous action—non-attachrment and world-harmony, illustrated by story of Janak—136. Man and society—man a creature of his environment—139—influence of the great teachers upon men—141—Christ—141; Buddha—143; Zoroaster (Zara-tushta)—144; Mohammad—148; Mahabir—159; Shankaracharya—159; Vaishnava saints—162; conclusion—163.

Krishna: model man—165. Teaching by example—167. Who is the actor—168. Don't confuse the unwise—169. The Teaching—170. Release from bondage—171. Fate of a detractor—171. Character determines action—174. The key to perfection—175. Fitness: the test of action—176. Desire—178, its operation—179, its control—181. Method of control—181.

## CHAPTER IV

### Yoga of Knowledge of Renunciation of Action

Page 183-234

Yoga taught to Vivasvat by Krishna—183. Arjun's surprise—184. Krishna explains—184. Perfect man—186. Avatara—189. Why Krishna comes—199. What does he come for—201. Ideal existence—204. Modes of attainment—205—path of liberation—206—path of bondage—207. Motive the test of action—208, form of activity no test—209. The Lord's path—212. Varieties of action—216—Karma, Akarma, Vikarma—217. What is non-action—218. The highest state of man—God-consciousness—221. Sacrifices for attainment—Vedic sacrifice, selfless sacrifice, sense-control, mind-control, self-determination—222, charity, aus-

terity, meditation, Veda-study, knowledge, pranayama—223, fasting—224. Knowledge sacrifice—225. Yoga essential for realization—229. Fate of a doubter—230. Both Yoga and knowledge are essential for Liberation—232. Call to fight—233.

## CHAPTER V

### Yoga of Renunciation of Action

Page 235-256

Sannyasi defined—236. Sankhya and Yoga are same—237. Yoga gives quicker results—239. A knower of Truth—241. Yogi in Action—242. Yogi contrasted with an ordinary man—243. Self within the Body—243. Good and evil—246. The self-knower—247. The God-knower—247. Nature of sense-enjoyments—249. The happy man—250. In tune with the Infinite—252. The free man of the Gita—253.

## CHAPTER VI

### Yoga of Meditation

Page 257-284

Sannyasi and Yogi defined—257. Sannyasa and Yoga are same—258. Self culture—259. Yoga attitude—261. How to attain Yoga—264—preliminary conditions—264—seat—266, posture—268. Moderation all round—271. Yoga state—271. Yoga yields true happiness—272. Yogi—275. Highest Yogi—276. Mind control by practice and dispassion—277, the only way to Yoga—279. Arjun's alarm—280. The soothing answer—281. Yogi superior to all—282. Yogi devoted to the Supreme the best—283.

## CHAPTER VII

### Yoga of Knowledge and Wisdom

Page 285-308

Two forms of My nature—matter and energy, and soul—286. The Supreme I manifested in man and nature—289—sapidity, light,

Aum, sound, manhood, fragrance, glow, life, austerity, seed, reason, strength, desire. The Maya of qualities—293. God seekers—the suffering, the inquirer, the seeker of self-interest and the knowing—296. The self-illuminated—298—Vasudev is this all—299—meaning of Vasudev—300. The desire-ridden—301—worship of devatas—its meaning—301. The delusion of opposites—305. The sinless—307.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Yoga of Imperishable Brahman

Page 309-322

Definitions of Brahman, adhyatma, Karma, adhibhut, adhi-daiva, and adhiyajna—310. Last thoughts determine next birth—311. How to merge in the Infinite after death—313. The Goal—315. Unmanifest nature—317. The Unmanifest Supreme—318. The two paths—Devayana and Pitriyana—319. Meaning of time in Shloka 23—319.

## CHAPTER IX

### Sovereign Science and Sovereign Secret

Page 323-345

Faith in the Science of the Supreme essential—323. The Supreme, His relation to Creation—326. The Deluded—329. The Yogis—330. The Learned—331. The beneficent Supreme—what is He—331. Whose goal is Heaven—their conduct—333. Whose goal is Me—334. Misguided worship—Service of Devas—335. True worship—total renunciation of possessions—338, and dedication of body-activity to the Supreme—339. The attitude of the Supreme towards beings—340. Who allowed to worship—all including persons born of evil wombs, women, Vaishyas, Shudras—341—the supreme assurance: "*Know Ye this, O Kunti-born, My devotee is never lost*"—342. The Untouchable—343. Mode of worship—345.

## CHAPTER X

## Divine Glories

Page 346-368

Qualities of beings from Me—347. The progenitors—Maharishis and Manus, their authenticity—347. The knowing devotee—350. Arjun's adoration, its authenticity—351. His desire to know various aspects of God for meditation, its authenticity—353. Divine glories—354. "Of the Pandavas Dhananjaya, of silent sages Vyas", its authenticity—361. Brihat-Sama—364. Gayatri—Meaning of Aum, Bhuh, Bhuah, Suah—Chhantlogya summary, Brihad Aranyak summary, Manu—364.

## CHAPTER XI

## Vision of the Universal Form

Page 369-393

The Universal form—370. Gift of divine vision—its meaning—371. Arjun's vision—374—The Supreme Centre—376; Arjun trembles—378; Doomed Kuru heroes—379; Other warriors—379. Arjun's puzzle—381. Krishna's mission—381. Assurance of victory—382. Adoration—384. Arjun craves forgiveness—386. Show your old form—four-armed, its authenticity—388. Arjun; an exception—Universal form shown to him alone, its authenticity—389. Sanjaya also saw it—390. Old form shown—391. Arjun self-possessed again—392. Who can see this form—qualifications—393.

## CHAPTER XII

## Yoga of Devotion

Page 394-404

Two aspects of the Supreme—394. Creator aspect—395. Unmanifest aspect—395, difficult to meditate upon—397. Supreme advice *re* meditation—worship of the Supreme as Creator—398.

Alternative modes of attaining the Supreme—399. Yoga of practice—Yoga of Renunciation—Yoga of action—399. Attributes of a devotee—401. Man a composite of cognition, feeling and will—uniform development of all necessary for true worship—403.

## CHAPTER XIII

### The Field and Knower of the Field

Page 405-421

The field—406. Its modifications—407. Knowledge—Its details—408. Knower of the field—411. Self and Nature both eternal—414. The Supreme and His attributes—416. Modes of attainment—Yogas of meditation, knowledge, action and worship—417. True Insight—418. The self is stainless—420.

## CHAPTER XIV

### The Three Qualities

Page 422-433

Highest knowledge—422. Nature My womb—*Satva*, *Raj*, *Tam* chain the self—*Satva* is purity—*Raj* is activity—*Tam* is ignorance and inertia—their action, and effect upon man—422. Gu-nateet—marks—conduct—430.

## CHAPTER XV

### The Supreme Spirit

Page 434-443

\*The world compared to the Ashvattha tree—its description—434. The supreme Goal—435. The self—definition—action—438. The supreme Self in action—439. Final synthesis—three categories—441—nature, self, supreme Self—442.

## CHAPTER XVI

### The Godly and the Démonic

Page 444-471

Virtues of the godly—444. Attributes of the démonic—451;



their nature—455; their faith—456; their normal attitude while acting—458. They ignore the Supreme—462. The consequence—465. Advice to Arjun—469. •

## CHAPTER XVII

### Threefold Faith

Page 472-501

What is faith—472. Worship of Devas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Bhuts, Pretas—477, idol worship—479. Unmethodical body mortification *tamasic*—480. Threefold (i) food—482, (ii) sacrifice—484, (iii) austerity—body (485)—speech (486)—mind (487)—488, (iv) charity—489. *Aum, Tat, Sāt*—497. Asat—500.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### Liberation in Renunciation

Page 502-546

Definition of Tyaga and Sannyas—502. Three kinds of Tyaga (renunciation) 504. A true Tyagi—506. The actor complex—five causes of action—508. Self alone not actor—509. Action complex—510. Threefold (i) knowledge; (511), (ii) action (513), (iii) actor (515), (iv) understanding (516), (v) fortitude (519), (vi) happiness (521).

The four orders—(castes) 523. Perfection—how attained—524. How to attain Brahman—529. Advice to Arjun—Krishna's final answer to Arjun to his questions on page 37;—530. (i) Surrender thyself, (535). (ii) Do thy duty to Me (536). (iii) Grieve not (536). Ideal existence—540. Krishna's question (542) Arjuna's answer "I am ready to fight"—543. Sanjaya's eulogy of the Gita—545. Effect of practising the teaching according to Sanjaya—546. Devotee's Fall—546. The Explanation—547. Devotee's psychology—547. Way out—551.

INDEX—553.

## INTRODUCTION

### I

#### *Meaning of Bhagwad Gita*

Bhagwad Gita incorporates the teaching imparted by the Supreme to Arjun on the battlefield of Kurukshetra through the mouth of Krishna. It was directed to stem the mighty surges of emotion which had enveloped Arjun's reason and produced in him an abhorrence for war with his cousins, restore his mental equilibrium and furnish a supremely pure motive for the fight in place of the mundane considerations which had created a conflict in his mind. In that it succeeded. As the causes which had brought about Arjun's collapse were such as are always in operation in men irrespective of place and time, the teaching has an abiding value for all. What were those causes? They were attachment to kin and relations producing a disinclination to kill for worldly ends; doubt whether success would be attained with the resources at his disposal, the perennial questions which ever trouble cultured and refined minds: is it worth while injuring others, much less relations and preceptors even though hostile, when the object may not be gained after all? Is it worth while involving our near and dear in suffering and loss under such circumstances? Is a life of penury and want devoid of good name worth living at all? The canker of despair creeps through the blood and destroys peace of mind, it forces into consciousness the questions—what after all is life

meant for? What is man's highest duty? What is the objective test by which man is to judge his action? All these doubts and delusions were removed and Arjun's grief destroyed by Krishna. A clear categorical test of human action was laid down and the true aim of life pointed out. Arjun started by refusing to fight (Shs. 31-33, 40, Chapter I and Shs 6-8, Chap. II) and ended by showing determination to fight (Sh. 73, Chap. XVIII).

Doubts and misgivings arise in the mind of everyman when undertaking something important or brought face to face with difficulties—fear that success may not attend his efforts, misgiving as to the propriety of the means adopted, mental shock due to some happening contrary to expectation which appears to have serious consequences (present or future), want of faith in his capacity to accomplish a task and resulting feeling of despair. These mental torments are the heritage of all men and not the monopoly of any particular class or creed. Therefore the solution indicated applies to all and is effective for all men.

The teaching has taken the form of a song as its sweet music soothes all, Sannyasi (recluse) or householder, prince or peasant, brahmin or pariah, No matter what his outward adornment or vocation in life, he who follows it is promised relief. The relief promised is liberation, constant companionship of Him whom all desire to please and attain.

Unswerving devotion to Him is the key to liberation. The lowest of the low are given the charter of liberty to practise it (Chapter IX, Shs. 32-33). The assurance to the devotee from whatever class drawn is

categorical and complete, "even if the greatest evildoer worships Me as an unswerving devotee, he should be regarded a good man, because he has rightly resolved. Soon he becomes a virtuous self and attains enduring peace; *know ye this, O Kuntiborn, My devotee is never lost*" (Chapter IX, Shs. 30-31).

The means pointed out are to be searched for in man's within. To mould his life according to the teaching man does not need social position, wealth, relations, literary education or any particular class of vocation in life. There are no external fetters imposed which may exclude anybody despite his desire to attain peace of mind. The Lord is the same to all (Chapter IX, Sh. 29). That is why the teaching is called *Bhagwad Gita*—the Song of the Lord. It lifts man to the highest state. Therefore it is superior to all other songs.

## II

### *The Teaching*

What is the primary cause of man's troubles? His wrong notions about his relation with the body and the world without, including therein kith and kin, fellow-men, sentient creatures, material objects and natural forces. These arise because he is ignorant of his true nature. Krishna commences the teaching with a discussion of the nature of man? Man is a composite of soul and body. Of the two the soul is eternal (Chapter II, Sh. 19) and body transient like unto a suit of clothes (Chapter II, Sh. 22). All external objects and forces affect the body only. These affections are constantly changing, so man should adopt an attitude of equanimity towards them.

The attitude of equanimity necessitates poise of reason. But in ordinary life one finds reason a handmaid of the senses and their objects. It is practically their slave, as it interprets happiness in terms of sense joys here and hereafter and directs all activity to collect the wherewithal for them. But these joys are in reality fleeting in their nature. Enduring happiness is possible only to one who looks for joy within and not in body-nurture or external possessions. So reason has to be restored to its proper status of a guide of the mind-machine under command of the self. It has to take its orders from the self and not be tempted by alluring sense-objects. Man should always live in the consciousness that his function is to act. What the fruit of that act is going to be is no concern of his, as it is entirely in the hands of his Maker. Poise of reason is attained by giving up attachment and aversion to sense-objects in the knowledge, that they minister to the body only, that their contact with it is ordained by the Supreme for its preservation, and allowing the senses to rove amongst them without being disturbed. He who moulds himself so attains true peace of mind.

Internal calm is obtained not by stopping sense-activity altogether which is impossible (Chap. III, Sh. 5), but by engaging in action without any idea of fruit therein. He who makes an outward show of equanimity by restraining his organs of action but indulges in mental rumination over everything is a hypocrite. If anything, he is more restless than ordinary men. But he, who is ever in command of his senses and engages the sense-organs in action without attachment, is superior to the rest. *He is a real man.*

Action man has got to perform. But if he wants to have the benefit of internal calm, it should be performed as duty, as dedicated service to the Supreme. Such action alone is liberating, all other action keeps man tied to the birth-cycle of the Universe. The whole Universe has been designed by the Supreme on this principle of action performed as duty without any thought of self. It is not a unit but an organism of innumerable parts, performing diverse functions. The principal elements and forces with their manifestations like the sun, moon, air, water, fire, electricity and magnetism called *Devas* act on this principle and serve creation. Non-rationals manipulate the *Devas* for their purposes by instinctive action. Man should manipulate them by voluntary action for the good of sentient life. Properly manipulated by man in the spirit of serving fellowmen, they would bestow all kinds of enjoyments and amenities of life on all.

The co-operative activity of all parts of the Universe-cycle\* maintains sentient life. It is this total activity which puts man in possession of material objects which satisfy his wants. They are meant for the use of all men and not only particular individuals who happen to become their custodians. Those who come to imagine that their possessions are the product of their own activity only and who ignoring the contributory activity of others, acquire an owner mentality in them and enjoy them alone, are thieves in the eyes of the Supreme. In denying others their share, as the fruit of their activity, and appropriating the same to them-

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\*For explanation and illustration, carefully read Page 446 line 5 *et seq.*

selves by treating it as their own, they lay themselves open to the charge of misappropriation.

Man's own necessities need not trouble him, so long as he discharges his proper functions. As his services are necessary and essential for the harmonious working of the universe, they are bound to be paid for in the shape of satisfaction of his wants by the Supreme Designer and Operator of this Universe. Therefore those who appropriate just what is necessary for their needs out of their possessions and treating themselves as custodians of the rest, manage it in the interest of those who are in need, are good men in truth and not they who only live for self. Such men are properly called eaters of sin.

It is by pure abstraction that man considers himself an owner. With the shedding of the body the whole edifice of "my goods" feeling is blown off into nothing like a soap bubble. Every day a portion of "my money" changes hands becoming "his money" and "my foodstuffs" and "my bodystuff" lodge in the great reservoir of mother earth, there to be transformed again into forms useful to man and delude him with "my goods" feeling. In fact nobody owns anything. There is the storehouse of nature, meant for each to draw upon according to his needs and engage his body in selfless activity. The cycle of nature runs thus—sentient life comes forth from food, food from rain, rain from cosmic activity, corporate cosmic activity results from action and action is the creation of the Creator, as it is He who has designed the parts, divided their functions and set the Universe in motion. So ultimately it is He who is at the back of all activity. The functioning

parts are simply His tools of action. How then can any man if truly illumined imagine himself to be an owner of anything? This owner mentality is a pure delusion, the source of ever so many worries of life. The Supreme is the true Owner. He who does not recognise this fundamental truth underlying the mechanism of this universe, but indulges in sense-delights and exists for himself alone, lives in vain, for he can never have peace. He alone enjoys enduring happiness who treats the storehouse of nature as the usufruct of all, but the property of the Supreme. In this consciousness he enjoys everything that he gets and never hankers after anything. He is ever grateful for what he gets and utilises his body for the good of all. He realises that even the most trivial thing that he uses is the product of the combined activity of sentient and non-sentient creation. So his own activity aims at world-harmony (*Loksaṅgrah*).

As co-operation is the root principle of all activity sentient or non-sentient, a very solemn duty is cast upon the *elite* of the human race as to how they behave and with what motive they normally act. They should never preach virtue in theory only but embody it in themselves. Contrary conduct confuses the mind of the common folk and makes them hypocritical, because they immitate them. It is because of this that Krishna himself set a personal example. He had no interest in the success or defeat of either party. Both stood in the same degree of relationship to him. He tried his utmost to avoid war, but on failure, at once advised a determined fight to the finish against the forces of evil regardless of suffering, and himself co-operated with right and justice. The reason is plain. If evil were not checked,



it would swamp virtue and introduce friction in the wheel of Universe leading to its destruction. The *knowing* should perform actions from a selfless motive keeping in view the welfare of all. This is the lesson to be learnt from the life of every great teacher\*.

In fact action is performed with the assistance of the body, senses, mind and reason, all separate from the self, in a world existing apart from and independent of the self. The task of the self is to furnish its motive only. He who understands the essence of things knows that all activity of the sense-organs is really ordained by the Supreme. He is aware of his part therein and is never confused. Like king Janak's, world-harmony (*Loksangrah*) becomes the motive of all his activity.

The proper way to perform action by sense-organs is to dedicate it to the Supreme their Designer without attachment to prospective gain. In this attitude was Arjun enjoined to fight. Those men alone who act in this attitude are released from the bondage of action. Ignorant folk who scoff at this teaching about the underlying basis of human activity and act otherwise on a calculation of what would bring immediate gain or relief from their torments without regard to its effect upon their fellowmen or other sentient creatures, are doomed men. When they do not adopt the only means to peace and happiness 'how can they attain them?' All their efforts are in vain. Theoretical appreciation of the teaching is not of much value, as all men act according to dispositions formed gradually during the course of life. No man can lift himself above his normal nature

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\*Zoroaster, Buddha, Mahavir, Christ, Mohammad, Nanak etc.

by a sudden jump. By gradual process alone should man try to destroy affection and aversion in sense-objects as they are the enemies lurking on the path of progress.

Motive being the real thing, one should always perform whatever action he is fitted for, from a motive of selfless service to the Supreme, without any feeling of sin or inferiority therein. \* It is wrong to classify activities as good or bad and high or low on the basis of arbitrary social standards set by individuals or classes in their own interest.

The cause of all sinful action is selfish desire in man. It brings him in conflict with others and gives rise to anger when its fulfilment is thwarted. It gets hold of man by affecting his senses, mind and reason. So the way to kill it is to rid these tools from its sway by poise of reason and selfless action. This is the one eternal method of conquering desire. The liberated out of love for mankind descend on earth to invite people's attention thereto from time to time. Such a one was Krishna. He was no God as is erroneously supposed. He puts himself on a par with Arjun in the matter of birth and death but on a far higher pedestal as regards knowledge and illumination (Chapter IV, Sh. 5). He comes to destroy wickedness and instal virtue in its true place. This is the highest and most important duty worth performing as without it this whole Universe is liable to break to pieces. This is ideal existence for mortal man also. One who lives in this consciousness and moulds his activity on this basis, becomes liberated and is not born again. Many men in the past took this view of life and attained the state of Krishna. It may be that

according to their make up, they started either by controlling and training feeling (devotion), or will (Karma-yoga) or reason (Gyan-yoga), but in the end all the three faculties were uniformly developed in their case, leading to the perfect state. Those who do not take this view of life, but desire worldly possessions for themselves change their motive of action. That is the only difference. Their organs of action perform the same functions as those of other men, as they are necessary for the course of the world cycle irrespective of the motive, taken singly or collectively. There must be the knowing part (brahmin), the protecting part (kshatriya), the preserving part (vaishya) and the serving part (shudra), or head, hands, stomach and feet. But no part is superior as such, the activity of each is essential. Motive determines the value of the activity and makes it superior or inferior according as it is directed to the good of the world or not. There is the instance of Krishna himself, born a Kshatriya, but unfolding the highest mysteries.

True, it is no easy matter to know the nature of action. Krishna divides action into three classes, *karma* (action) *akarma* (non-action) and *vikarma* (prohibited action). Karma includes normal self-regarding activity. Vikarma denotes action which is regarded injurious by society as a result of age-long experience and on that ground prohibited. Akarma denotes that activity of the body in which a self-illuminated man engages with a view to make his contribution to world-activity, considering it necessary for preservation of the world-order, without any desire to obtain personal gain therefrom, or its more sublime form in which he regards the

body engaging in activity as an instrument of the Supreme who has made it and assigned definite functions to its various parts.

One who acts, conscious that all activity within and without is a play of the Supreme, has attained the highest state. He has become independent of nature. All actions of his body being by way of sacrifice leave no desire in him to reap their fruit. They become a part of divine activity. The desire to become pure and live happily is inherent in man. He resorts to various processes for self-purification and internal peace; like performance of Vedic sacrifices, service of fellowmen by curbing his selfish desires, sense-control, mind-control, self-control, charity, scripture-study, meditation, breath-control (*pranayam*) and fasting. But attainment of wisdom-mentality and discharging one's duties in that outlook is the best. Then there can arise no confusion in face of a difficult situation. The man loses all sense of duality and does not act to the detriment of anyone. This mentality is acquired not by escaping into the jungle from the world-stage, but by close observation of nature, study under the guidance of a teacher and living out the teaching by service of sentient creation. True wisdom is a purifying force of infinite power, it tempers all human action by destroying its taint of self-regard and transforms it into the nature of divine activity. He who has understood the true nature of action by practice of Karma-Yoga attains this mentality in due course.

Such is the mentality of a true Yogi or Sannyasi. He performs action with his body but remains unaffected like unto a drop of water on lotus leaf. While his

sense-organs are active he knows that it is not he as self who is acting but that his senses are roving amidst their objects. Is he not conscious that he is neither the creator of the senses and their functions nor of the Universe where in they move? In his eyes all this is a play of the Supreme. He sees the hand of Providence in everything and so escapes the delusion, in which he finds the common folk immersed around him. Finding himself seated in the nine-gated city (body) he holds its command and moves about as a complete master.

Strenuous life in the world, with the senses under control, leads a man actively conscious of his true nature as an emanation from the Supreme, to perfection and not yellow-robed begging or cowardly escape into the jungle. Living ever in tune with the Infinite and acting unaffected by the course of nature is the road to liberation. This is attained by becoming of His mind, and His devotee, by dedicating all activity to Him and bowing to Him; in short by disregarding all temporal attachments and seeking unswerving refuge in Him. He alone and none else knows everything and can serve as a true guide. He alone is capable of leading erring man to perfection through the welter of mistakes. Therefore Arjun is enjoined by Krishna to accept his advice and abiding in the Supreme fight with a clear conscience in the cause of righteousness, undisturbed by feelings of compassion or remorse for killing his own kith and kin.

### III

#### *Study and Practice*

I am conscious of considerable departures from the views of the great commentators like Shankar, Ramanuj,

Madhav, Gyaneshwar and Lokmanya Tilak, contained in these pages. This is a feature which places an obscure writer like myself who can lay no claim to a mature understanding of religion or philosophy or a practical knowledge of Yoga, in an embarrassing position. But my diffidence has been kept in check by the sincere conviction that the conclusions tentatively put forward by me for the reader's consideration, in a spirit of genuine humility have crystalised in my mind slowly and gradually from a somewhat close and critical study of the Mahabharat and the great Scriptures, reflective analysis of the working of the human mind and prolonged meditation, assisted from time to time by fasting (on crucial occasions extending to three weeks) and earnest prayer to the Spirit within for light and guidance. I humbly plead this, lest a reader, floored by the subtle dialectics of the great Shankar, or lifted into the cloud lands of emotional fervour by the tone of intense piety of His devotees Ramanuj and Madhav and the devotional outpour of Krishna-mad Gyaneshwara or captivated by Tilak's vigorous philosophy of action and filled with a sense of his own insignificance by the wide learning and research displayed in his monumental treatise, may feel inclined to pass an adverse judgment upon me for daring to differ from them.

The generous reader may bear with me fortified by the thought that those commentators were profound scholars and thinkers. They gave the benefit of their vast learning and experience to a world spiritually starved and unable to probe into the mysteries of the mighty teaching without guidance. While these pages are from the pen of a pilgrim, oppressed by the feeling of want in plenty, loneliness in company and conscious of his

utter incapacity to adjust himself to the ever increasing demands of the human frame, which left to itself dare control the resources of the entire universe, to discover at last that even that would leave a feeling of void behind.

My earnest prayer to the reader is to appreciate the teaching by exercise of his own judgment rather than view it through the eyes of the great pundits. A thoughtful reading of the text supplemented by some reflection would still many a doubt arising in his mind. It would lift him above the petty limitations of everyday existence and give a fair idea of his true nature and relation to the Supreme and the world without.

Repeated readings of the comments of the leader of a sect or school of thought with blind faith in their infallibility or parrot-like recitations of the shlokas may give some sentimental satisfaction for the moment, but lead one nowhere. They do not make a deep impression on conduct, which is influenced by the priest, the astrologer, and the neighbour versed in the legendary lore, as his ethical code. In the ordinary pursuits of life, he remains a creature of his environment and takes his notions of right and wrong therefrom. But reflective study of the teaching and a critical and incisive analysis of one's daily conduct in its light with determination renewed from day to day to constantly keep the senses under command and not to repeat the detected error again, gradually ushers in the dawn of a new consciousness of human destiny and unfolds powers of which the theorist and the parrot can have no conception.

The seeker would find before long, that true satisfaction and solace is not to be found in the feeling of

self-importance generated by the volume of business and its gains, high office, or the interested trumpet cries of the obliged in praise of their benefactor. It abides in a heart large enough to, truly rejoice in the prosperity and happiness of others, be charitable towards human failings and beat in unison with suffering. It attends a reason which remains unsullied amidst the vicissitudes of fortune, calm at the sight of suffering, and employs the body-instrument to perform such functions as it is fitted for by training and innate tendency, in discharge of man's obligations to self and dependants, relief of distress, and a vigorous fight against oppression and injustice wherever and in whatever form found, without fear of the caste-fellow or the magistrate, in the spirit of performing a duty owed to sentient creation. Krishna himself serves as a model of action to man in this spirit (p. 166). Says he "for protection of the good and destruction of the evildoers, for reinstatement of Dharma in its true place, I am born from age to age".







# श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता

SHRIMAD BHAGWADGITA

CHAPTER I

Dejection of Arjun

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।

मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत संजय ॥ १ ॥

**Dhritrashtra spoke—**

*On the holy plain of Kurukshetra*

*Assembled together battle-minded*

*Mine and the sons of Pandu what did they ?*

*Oh Sanjaya. 1*

**Question—**What was the cause of this fratricidal war?

**Answer—**The cause of this war was Duryodhan's determination to deprive the Pandavas of their rightful claim to the kingdom of their father Pandu, then ruled by Dhritrashtra, and usurp the whole to himself. At an early stage he had made an attempt to get rid of

Bhima by poisoning. Then as the cousins grew older he succeeded in having them removed to Varnavat, with a view to secretly burn them alive in the shellac palace, there built for their residence. But the plot failed and the five brothers with their mother escaped into exile homeless and without resource. Then after suffering untold hardships in the woods and jungles for long, they, in disguise, attended the marriage-contest of Princess Draupadi. There Arjun won the contest and married Draupadi. Immediately after Draupadi's father King Drupad discovered the identity of the Pandavas. He and Krishna intervened on their behalf and prevailed upon King Dhritrashtra, uncle of the Pandavas, to restore half the kingdom to them. They built a new town Inderprastha (near Delhi) as their capital and began to rule there. By their valour and enterprise the Pandavas added considerably to their kingdom and wealth rousing terrible jealousy in the mind of Duryodhan. But they always entertained a warm regard for their hundred and one cousins, the Kurus (sons of Dhritrashtra).

On the occasion of the great Rajasuya sacrifice they invited them all and appointed them to offices of dignity in connection therewith. Duryodhan was put in charge of the presents received from princes and other allies of the Pandavas. Seeing the number and value of these presents Duryodhan's envy was aflame and several other incidents occurred, like the sight of homage paid by so many princes to King Yudhistir, the elaborate arrangements of the sacrifice, the festivities, and last but not least, the harmless amusement of Draupadi and the Pandavas at his expense, as he was shown

round their beautiful palace where he mistook the skilfully polished surface of the floor of a room for a pond of water, a falsely painted door on a wall for a real one, a real door for a painted wall and acting accordingly, caused great merriment, which however he did not relish. All these cut him to the quick. Duryodhan was consumed with hatred and jealousy. He conspired with his maternal uncle Shakuni, a highly skilled and unscrupulous gambler, his brother Dushasan and friend Karan, a warrior of renown; and prevailed upon his father Dhritrashtra, to hold a big assembly and invite the Pandavas to a gambling match.

Blind Dhritrashtra yielded though reluctantly. An assembly was organised and invitation was sent to Yudhistir, the eldest Pandava. The Pandavas accepted the invitation according to custom, and Yudhistir and Shakuni played in full assembly in the presence of Dhritrashtra and his sons, the senior Kuru Bhishm, family preceptors Dronacharya and Kripacharya, and learned Brahmans Sanjaya and others, uncle Vidur, and many princes. None except Vidur objected and pointed out the evil consequences of this Kuru design. Shakuni by artful manipulation of dice dishonestly secured the entire kingdom and wealth of the Pandavas including their person, and finally persuaded King Yudhistir to stake Draupadi. She was also lost. This led to the awful scene of an attempt by Duryodhan's brother Dushasan to strip Princess Draupadi naked before the full assembly after insulting her by pulling her hair. Draupadi's heartrending wails and appeals to the senior Kurus Dhritrashtra and Bhishma, and learned Brahmans Sanjaya, Drona, Krip and

Ashwatthama, fell on deaf ears. Dushasan and Karan's cruel address to her as a "maid servant" and wanton suggestion to select one of the Kurus as husband, referring to the Pandavas sitting there, as helpless and dead, left an indelible scar in their hearts. Ultimately Duryodhan's success in driving the Pandavas with Draupadi into exile for a period of 12 years, with the condition of remaining in disguise for another year, before getting back the kingdom; with a penalty in case of discovery, of 12 years exile and a year's disguise, coupled with his insulting behaviour towards them at the time of their departure for the woods, were acts highly offensive to their sense of pride and honour. They all, except King Yudhistir who preserved an unperturbable calm, took terrible vows of vengeance against the offending Kurus on return from exile.

In the woods these princes suffered intolerable hardships and privation for 12 years. In the 13th year they had to spend their time, disguised as menials, in the service of King Virat. Even after this period of torment and agony, endured in fulfilment of promise, they found Duryodhan in no mood to restore their kingdom and wealth back. He had instead utilised this period in raising and equipping a large army, and forming alliances to resist any armed attempt by the Pandavas, to wrest their kingdom back from him. So after the marriage of King Virat's daughter to Arjun's son Abhimanyu, an army was raised as a precautionary measure, at the instance of Satyaki a maternal uncle of the Pandavas, and at the same time, at Krishna's suggestion, negotiations were opened with Duryodhan for an amicable settlement. There were several conferences. At the

first conference Sanjaya on behalf of Duryodhan pressed into service all his Brahmanic skill and learning in persuading the Pandavas, to leave Duryodhan alone and not claim anything, to retire into the woods and lead a life of begging if need be, rather than slaughter the Kurus—their kinsmen, for transient worldly gain. To this in the presence of Arjun, Yudhishtir and Krishna gave very effective and telling replies. Krishna himself went to Hastinapur on behalf of the Pandavas. There he found practically all including Dhritrashtra, Bhishma, Drona, Krip, Ashwatthama, Vikarana, Saumdatti and other important persons, even Duryodhan's mother, Queen Gandhari, of his opinion. But Duryodhan and his associates Karan, Shakuni and Dushasan heedless of future consequences were obdurate and rejected all offers of peace, totally convinced of their invincible position, in case of war. They had a rooted belief that they would defeat the Pandavas, and under the instigation of Karan, became quite anxious to finally deal with the Pandavas and force war upon them. So Krishna's mission failed, and he advised the Pandavas to vindicate their righteous claim to kingdom by force of arms. Therefore the armies were collected together at Kurukshetra. Dhritrashtra being blind did not attend, and so he put the above question to Sanjaya, for information.

संजय उवाच

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।

आचार्यमुपसंगम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२॥

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।  
 व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

**Sanjaya replied—**

*Seeing the Pandava hosts arranged in battle-array  
 Prince Duryodhan,  
 Approaching Dronacharya, spake these words—2  
 Behold this mighty army of the sons of Pandu,  
 O Acharya  
 Arranged in battle order by Drupad's son—  
 thy pupil clever. 3*

### Pandava Generals

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमायुधि ।  
 युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥ ४ ॥  
 धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।  
 पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुंगवः ॥ ५ ॥  
 युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।  
 सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥ ६ ॥

*Herein are heroes, mighty archers like unto  
 Bhīma and Arjun in battle,  
 Yuyudhan, Virat, and Drupad of the great car. 4  
 Dhrishtketu, Chekitan, and the valiant King  
 of Kashi,  
 Purujit, Kuntibhoj and Shaibya, bull amongst  
 men. 5*

*Yudhamanyu, the terrible and Uttomauja, the  
valiant,  
Subhadra's and Draupadi's sons, all of mighty  
cars. •6*

### Kuru Generals

• अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।  
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ॥७॥  
भवान्भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिजयः ।  
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥८॥  
अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।  
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥९॥

*Our chiefs, too, note ye, best of the twice-born,  
Generals of my army, I name, for thy  
information. 7*

*Yourselſ, Bhiſhma, Karan, Kriſh victor in war,  
Aſhwatthama, Vikarana and Saumadatti as well. 8  
Many others, warriours brave, for me forſaking life,  
Carrying manifold arms, all well ſkilled in war. 9*

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।  
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ॥१०॥  
अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।  
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥११॥



*Of unlimited strength is our army under the  
care of Bhishma  
Of limited strength is their army guarded by  
Bhima. 10*

*In all divisions occupying your respective positions  
Support Bhishma, ye and all others. 11*

**Question**—Why did Duryodhan say that his army was of unlimited strength?

**Answer**—Because in point of numbers it was four Akshauhinis (army corps) more than the Pandava army. In the matter of food supply, arms and equipment, it was superior, as it had the entire resources of the huge Kuru kingdom at its back and had been trained and equipped for the last 13 years for this encounter. Besides it was led by veteran leaders like Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, and Ashwatthama, whom Duryodhan regarded invincible. It is true that these leaders were not hostile to the Pandavas and had a high regard for them. They regarded the Pandava claim as just. But any misgiving in Duryodhan's mind on this score was bound to be set at rest by recollection of their cold behaviour towards the Pandavas and Princess Draupadi in spite of Vidura's protest, on the occasion of the Shakuni swindle thirteen years before. They had proved to be quite docile servants of the state. His companions Karana, Dushasana and Shakuni had been feeding Duryodhan's vanity and inculcating in his mind the belief that he could never be defeated by the Pandavas. Even though Krishna himself went to plead the Pandava cause at Hastinapur and made a stirring appeal to the assembled Kurus, Duryodhan remained unaffected, and

even went to the length of making an abortive attempt to arrest him, an ambassador, to compel Dhritrashtra and the elder Kurus, not to yield a jot to the hated Pandavas. Duryodhan in his inordinate vanity had come to possess unbounded confidence in his ability to defeat the Pandavas with the assistance of his allies. His own disposition and surroundings made him oblivious of the moral side of the issue. He counted success in terms of men, money, equipment, and good leadership. And in these he was certainly better placed than the Pandavas. As he hated the Pandavas, rather than yield, he was anxious to achieve now what he had failed to achieve before, when he sought to burn the Pandavas alive in the shellac palace at Varnavat.

**Question**—Why should we not accept the contrary view of Sri Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya and Madhavacharya about this shloka:—

Our army under Bhishma seems insufficient,  
Against the Pandava, army under Bhima.

**Answer**—This interpretation runs in the very teeth of Duryodhan's attitude prior to this declaration. Duryodhan as War Lord was engaged in conversation with his teacher, the veteran Drona, in full consciousness of the sympathy of Drona, Bhishma and Kripa for the Pandavas. Nothing new had happened to give him cause for any despondency after his rejection of Krishna's offer of peace. Any feeling of uncertainty of victory would have at once solved the difficulty, for all he had to do to avoid battle was to give five villages to the Pandavas and buy their good will. Nothing but absolute confidence

in his invincibility could have induced him to stick to his resolution to fight, for Yudhishtir was not willing to give battle if the matter could be settled amicably, and Krishna himself had clearly stated in the Assembly at Hastinapur "that the Pandavas inspite of Duryodhan's life-long ill-will towards them desired to live in peace under him that if he gave up his hostility to them they would conquer kingdoms for his enjoyment and that by sticking to his hostile attitude, relying on Karan, Dushasan and Shakuni, he would only bring disaster on himself." Dhritrashtra, the other Kurus, Queen Gandhari and the teachers, all favoured peace.

The generals, Drona, Bhishma, Kripa and Ashwatthama were not in favour of war. They were in sympathy with the Pandavas. It was their sense of dependence upon Dhritrashtra, that had forced them to side with Duryodhan. They were by no means confident of his victory. Only Duryodhan's obstinacy barred the way to peace. If the morale of Duryodhan's party had been shaken as this interpretation would lead us to suppose, then war would have been absolutely out of the question. Drona and Bhishma would have used this despondency to advantage and at once advised Duryodhan to close the painful chapter by sharing the kingdom with the Pandavas. Half a loaf is better than none, is the policy of all discreet men when pitted against heavy odds. Shloka 12 following, should not be taken to mean that Bhishma as an ardent advocate of this unrighteous war, seeing Duryodhan's despair came to his rescue and tried to rouse his drooping spirits by taking steps to begin the battle himself before it was too late. Nothing could more misrepresent his atti-

tude. Bhishma was throughout an ardent advocate of peace with the Pandavas. They stood in the same degree of relationship to him as the Kurus, and for them, he a man of great virtue and austere vows, had the highest regard as good men endowed with virtuous qualities. As he himself admits, he was siding with Duryodhan because of self-interest, and was not very keen about his success. But being a tried warrior he was a source of great strength to the Kurus and fear to the Pandavas.

### Kuru Conches

तस्य संजनयन्हर्षं कुस्वृद्धः पितामहः ।  
 सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥ १२ ॥  
 ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।  
 सहस्रैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ १३ ॥

*To give him pleasure, the senior Kuru, grandsire  
 the glorious  
 Roaring a lion's roar, blew his conch. 12  
 Then conches, kettle-drums, tabors, drums and  
 cow-horns  
 Blew forth of a sudden, that din was something  
 terrific. 13*

### Pandava Conches

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।  
 माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ॥ १४ ॥  
 पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनन्जयः ।  
 पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ १५ ॥

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।  
 नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥ १६ ॥  
 काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।  
 धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥ १७ ॥  
 द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।  
 सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् ॥ १८ ॥

*Then in powerful chariot, yoked to white horses,  
 seated  
 Madhava and Pandav their celestial conches  
 blew. 14*  
*Panchjanya, the Lord of Senses,\* Devdutt,  
 Dhananjaya†  
 Paundra, super conch the wolf-bellied‡ of  
 awful deeds. 15*  
*"Eternal Victory" King Yudhishtir, born of Kunti,  
 Nakul and Sabdev "Sweet toned" and  
 "Gem flowered" conches. 16*  
*Kashya, mighty bowman, and Shikhandi of  
 the great car,  
 Drishtadyumna, Virat, and Satyaki,  
 the invincible. 17*  
*Drupad and Draupadi's sons; all around, O lord  
 of earth  
 Subhadra's son of mighty arms, separately their  
 conches blew. 18*

\* Krishna

† Arjun

‡ Bhima

**Conch-effect on the Kurus**

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।

नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलो व्यनुनादयन् ॥ १६ ॥

*That noise, the hearts of Dhritrashtra's sons  
rent asunder  
Heaven and Earth with that tumultuous din  
resounding. 19*

**Arjun addresses Krishna**

अथ व्यवस्थितान्दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कापिध्वजः ।

प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसम्पाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ॥ २० ॥

हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ।

अर्जुन उवाच

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ २१ ॥

यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।

कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन्नणसमुद्यमे ॥ २२ ॥

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।

धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥ २३ ॥

*Then glancing at Dhritrashtra's army drawn up  
ready to strike.*

*The flight of missiles just to begin*

*Pandu's son, the ape-crested, lifting his bow. 20*

*To lord of senses, spake these words, O lord of*

*earth.*

**Arjun said—**

*Betwixt the two armies my chariot post,*

*O Unwavering. 21*

**Answer**—Arjun, a high-souled warrior, jealous of the noble traditions of chivalry and sense of duty of his illustrious house, brave, of righteous conduct, well versed in the religious lore of his time, generous, yet highly sensitive of personal and family honour, had along with his brothers the misfortune to grow up in the stifling atmosphere of hostility of his cousin Duryodhan, who had an innate hatred of the Pandavas. He was aware of the firm resolve of Duryodhan not to yield a single inch of ground to his cousins. He knew Duryodhan's belief in his invincibility. He was painfully conscious of the help Duryodhan was receiving from other princes, who though no enemies of the Pandavas were yet helping him regardless of the morality of the dispute.

and the propriety of their attitude towards it. Duryodhan's enthusiasm was unbounded. He felt as if he were within an ace of victory. Many princes were co-operating. The veteran warriors Bhishma, Drona, Krip, and Ashwatthama, convinced of the justice of the Pandava claim, were in the field to defeat it by force out of pure greed, in the interests of Duryodhan, whom they knew to be an evil-minded, greedy, grasping, ambitious and unscrupulous prince.

There Arjun found arrayed in front, Unscrupulous Cupidity, fully armed and equipped, led by the mighty warriors, Bhishma, Drona and Krip, who not minding their ethical judgment had bartered away their skill and experience for a full stomach, assisted by Princes with their hosts, no less heartless, devoid of a sense of right and wrong, aflame in the enthusiasm of coming victory to their friend, and eager to strike a deadly blow at Right and Justice.

All hope of amicable settlement had been belied. The day of reckoning had come, at last, after long and weary waiting. Now the rigid vows taken thirteen years before, the heart's desires, for the paternal kingdom, for the reinstatement of family name tarnished by the wicked deeds of the Kurus and dealing an effective blow to injustice, deceit, and brute force, and the terrible agonising longing to avenge Draupadi's wrongs, which had occupied Arjun's being these thirteen years, were after all to be fulfilled. Only this obstacle in front presented itself,—the army of the Kurus. In removal of it by victory lay the solution. What a situation! All attempts at peace had failed. War had been forced upon them by the enemy in his blind pride of Power.



Justice was on their side and enthusiasm on the other, as also anticipation of victory. Surely the conduct of the allied princes, was strange, and objectionable, as was the enthusiasm of the senior Kuru Bhishma of the "lion's roar." What an ignoble obstacle to a righteous cause! Thus disturbed in mind. Arjun yields to anger and desires to look at these warriors, so enthusiastic in the cause of unrighteousness.

### Between the two Armies

संजय उवाच

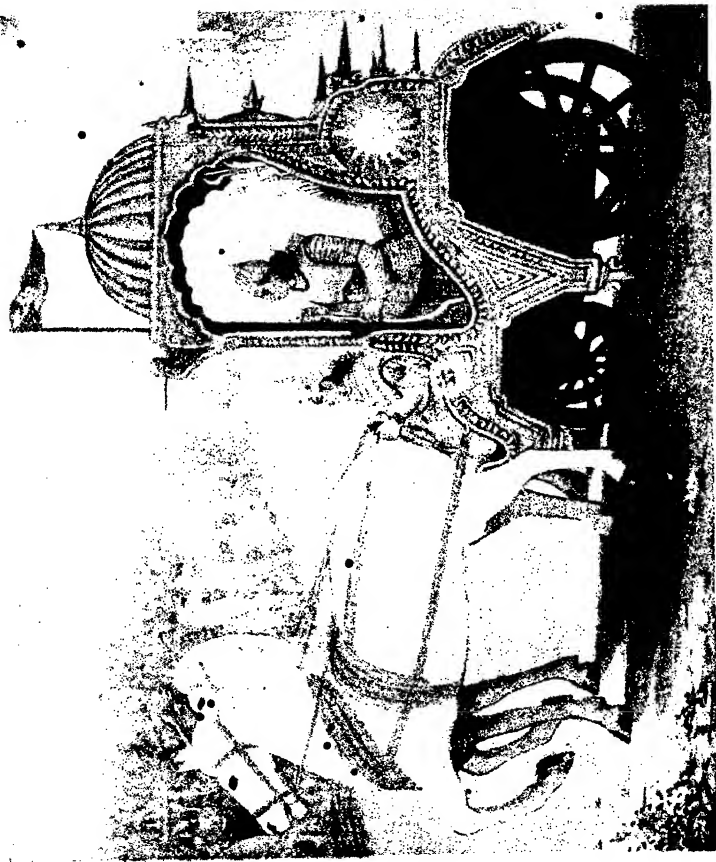
एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।  
 सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥ २४ ॥  
 भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।  
 उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरुनिनि ॥ २५ ॥

Sanjaya said—

*Addressed thus, the Lord of senses\* by the lord  
 of sleep, O Bharat  
 Amidst the two armies having stationed that  
 best of chariots. 24  
 Bhishma and Drona facing, and all ruling chiefs,  
 Said "O Parth, survey these Kurus assembled  
 here together." 25*

### The Scene

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान्पार्थः पितृनथं पितामहान् ।  
 आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातृन्पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ॥ २६ ॥



Betwixt the two armies



श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव

सेनयोरुभयोरपि ।

तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्वन्धून्वस्थितान् ॥ २७ ॥

*Then saw there standing, Parth, sires, grandsires  
Preceptors, maternal uncles, brothers, sons,  
grandsons, companions, too. 26  
Fathers-in-law and comrades, in the two armies,  
Seeing these, Kunti born, all kinsmen standing  
arrayed. 27*

### Arjun's Breakdown

कृपया परयाऽऽविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ।

दृष्ट्वेमं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ॥ २८ ॥

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥ २९ ॥

गाण्डीवं स्रंसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥ ३० ॥

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।

न च ध्वेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥ ३१ ॥

न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ।

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥ ३२ ॥

*Overcome by compassion and feeling distressed  
spake thus,  
"Seeing my kinsmen, O Krishna drawn up  
battle minded. 28*

*My limbs droop and my mouth drieth up  
My frame shakes and hair stand on end..* 29

*Gandiva (bow) slips from hand the very skin burns  
I cannot stand as I am and my mind whirls in  
confusion.* 30

*Omens evil do I perceive, O Keshav  
I see not good in killing kin in battle.* 31

*I desire not victory, O Krishna, nor kingdom nor  
comforts*

*What for me is kingdom, O Govind, what  
enjoyments, (aye!) life itself.* 32

**Question**—Arjun desired to survey his opponents who stood across his way to victory, who had unrighteously forced war upon him, heedless of consequences, rather than admit the Pandava claim, and Krishna too acceding to his request had desired him to look at the Kuru army in front of him, then how did Arjun come to confine attention only to relations in the Kuru army and his own, and then filled with pity collapse altogether?

**Answer**—Arjun had a look at the Kuru hosts and surveyed them carefully. He found facing him Greed in shining armour, assisted on flanks by powerful allies, captained by virtue, sold to greed out of greed. Neither in numbers nor in general equipment and resources were the enemy inferior. Enthusiasm and determination was visible amongst them. Was victory an easy walk over these ably led legions? Virtue and Justice was on his side, true, but the virtuous were siding with wrong. \ It was a pure trial of strength and en-

duration. And the enemy certainly gave no indication that they were wanting in these. It was no easy task to judge who was stronger. Victory was not certain.\*

We do not know which is stronger of the two,

Whether we will win or they would defeat

us. II. 6

And now let me look at our army. All kith and kin assembled ready to lay down life, yes, but for victory only. If no victory, slaughter futile, battle hardly worth while. Slaughter certain, victory uncertain, this appeared to be the situation, and, under these circumstances:—

\*An hour before at dawn, Yudhishtir had made a final survey of the Kuru army and the following conversation had taken place between him and Arjun:—

1. Seeing the vast army of Dhritrashtra's son, the son of Kunti, King Yudhishtir was filled with grief.

2. Having seen the impenetrable *Vyūha* formed by Bhishma and having concluded it to be really impenetrable the King became pale and thus spoke to Arjun.

3. "O mighty armed hero, O Dhananjaya how shall we be able to fight with the Dhritrashtra's sons' army when the grandfather himself commands it?

4. Immovable and impenetrable is this *Vyūha* formed according to the rules of the *Shastras*, by the chastiser of foes, Bhishma, of unfading memory.

5. O Chastiser of foes we are doubtful of success. How can victory be ours in the face of this Kuru army."

6. That Chastiser of foes, Arjun thus spoke of Duryodhan's army to the son of Pritha, Yudhishtir who was in great grief.

10. "They that are desirous of victory do not so much conquer by might and prowess as by truth, compassion, piety and virtue."

By killing whom we have no desire to live,  
 The sons of Dhritrashtra stand arrayed facing ..  
 us. II. 6

How tragic! gone all hope of fulfilling the vows of getting the kingdom back, of punishing wickedness, of removing slur on family honour, of establishing the reign of right and justice against that of fraud, cupidity, and brute force. Nothing but starvation for the family, a life of penury and want, devoid of name and honour, with the Kurus jubilant over the downfall of their hated enemies, and that without shooting an arrow. Fight is useless because result is uncertain. Purposeless slaughter of kin is sinful.

*Arjun received a terrible mental shock because of the shattering of cherished hopes which had gripped his*

11. Therefore knowing the difference between piety and impiety and understanding what is meant by covetousness and having recourse to only exertion, fight without any arrogance for victory is certain to be there where righteousness is.

(Dutt's Tr. Maha. Bhishm. Ady. 21 Shlokas 1 to 6, 10 and 11).

It is worthy of note in this connection that the argument advanced by Arjun was no new thing to Yudhishtir who had the reputation of being an incarnation of (Dharma) righteousness. He had preserved calm amidst the distressing scenes of the Gambling Assembly thirteen years before, when even Arjun became perturbed and vowed vengeance against the Kurus. But seeing the Kuru hosts in flesh and blood Yudhishtir's emotional equilibrium was disturbed, and the point of view emphasised by Arjun in his reply assumed a subordinate position in his mind for the time. Arjun when he calmed him down had not surveyed the enemy. But later on when he himself took a full view of the enemy forces, he also became emotionally disturbed and became uncertain of complete victory, as he states in the above shloka.

*being these 13 years, on the hard rock of Kuru opposition. There was nothing left to live for. These had made up the whole active content of his mind till that day.' So the physical and mental machinery broke down on account of this misgiving as to the result.*

Krishna gives the genesis of a collapse like Arjun's probably with pointed reference to him in Shlokas 62 and 63 of Chapter II thus—

“By dwelling on objects therewith man conceives attachment

From attachment is born desire, from (thwarted) desire comes anger (62)

From anger ariseth delusion, from delusion confusion of memory,

From confusion of memory loss of reason, reason gone, the man is lost” (63).

That Arjun's collapse was as complete as the one described in the above Shlokas is clear from Shlokas 29 and 30 above. If this is a correct genesis of such a state, then the cause of collapse could not be delusion for kinsmen at all, for *he had not been dwelling upon this, these long years, but on the cherished desires described above. It is because he found these unrealisable without complete victory that he broke down.* But though there was a breakdown of the body engine and reason, which led to perception of adverse omens relating to the result of the battle, egoism at once took up the reins, and even in this state of collapse, *raked up the sub-conscious to get hold of materials for still preserving its superiority over the sinning Kurus, and dry up the damping effect of this aversion to fight, on his personality.* So we



find Arjun practically a heaving corpse, with "parched lips", and "whirling mind" protesting against the utility of victory, kingdom, and enjoyment, and unconsciously giving the show away *by declaring "life itself", as not a desirable thing.*

There is no doubt that in view of disappointed ambition, Arjun's life had lost all attraction in his eyes for the time, when viewed in the light of his long cherished ambitions he wanted to realise, but it certainly could not have done so from the point of view of renunciation of the life of a householder in favour of a life of asceticism. One tired of life itself cannot strive for liberation, which is the goal of renunciation. Such a person is self-blind. There is no such thing as extinction of life for a believer in Veda. Far from indicating wisdom or craving for liberation (*Mumukshuta*) in Arjun, this despair of life discloses a state of total ignorance and demonstrates how terrible and complete was the shock he had received, and how deep was its effect on his personality. At the same time it shows that so powerful was his sense of pride that it quickly asserted itself and searched out a strong and apparently benevolent motive against war, evading the true one. *So in reality Arjun on a survey of enemy dispositions became uncertain of victory which brought about his collapse. Without Arjun being fully conscious of it, his egoism took shelter behind the plea of family and tradition as below—*

### Delusion in Kīn

येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ।

त इमेऽस्त्यक्त्वा युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ॥ ३३ ॥

आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ।

मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः सम्बन्धिनस्तथा ॥ ३४ ॥

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ।

अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ॥ ३५ ॥

*For whose sake we crave kingdom, joys and  
comforts  
Here they are, arrayed for battle, renouncing  
life and possessions. 33*

*Teachers, sires, sons as well grandsires,  
Maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons,  
brothers-in-law even relations. 34*

*These I desire not to kill, though slaying me,  
O slayer of Madhu,  
Even for the sovereignty of the three worlds,  
what of this earth. 35*

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ।

पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान् हत्वैतानाततायिनः ॥ ३६ ॥

तस्मान्नाहं क्यं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रन्स्ववान्धवान् ।

स्वजनं हि क्यं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम मावव ॥ ३७ ॥

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।

कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥ ३८ ॥

क्यं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।

कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्भिर्जनार्दन ॥ ३९ ॥

*Killing these sons of Dhritrashtra, what satisfaction is it to us, Janardan,  
Sin (verily) shall abide in us by slaying these desperadoes.\* 36*

*Therefore we should not destroy these sons of Dhritrashtra our Kin  
Killing our Kin, tell me, how shall we be happy,  
O Madhav. 37*

*Though these realise not in a greed-set mind  
The evil of destroying family or the sin of hostility to friends. 38*

*Why should not we heed the reaction against this sin,  
The evil of family destruction, we who see,  
O Janardan. 39*

**Objection**—Arjun here has substantially adopted the argument advanced by Sanjaya on behalf of Duryodhan, before the Pandavas at the Viratnagar peace conference, to refrain from killing kinsmen out of greed for kingdom. This had been effectively replied to by Yudhishtir, and Krishna in particular, in his presence. Krishna reminding Sanjaya, of his own dutiful silence fully aware of Duryodhan's evil design to trap the Pandavas, of his being an eye-witness of the incident of the attempt at stripping Draupadi's person

\*The following offenders are known as (Atatai) desperadoes:

1. Who commits mischief by fire.—Arson.
2. Who kills by poisoning.
3. Who is intent on murder.
4. Who extorts valuables by force.
5. Who occupies the land of another by force.
6. Who entices away a woman.

(Manu).

naked, and of the cruel address of his masters to Draupadi and the Pandavas, again diplomatically preaching duty to them in his master's interest, pointed out to him that claiming what was one's own was no sin, even to the point of war in case of obstinacy of the opponent, provided there was as with the Pandavas, a desire not to have recourse to the arbitrament of war except as a last resort. Else vice might soon drive away all virtue, and the existence of Kshatriyas as protectors lose all meaning. This very argument of family destruction had failed to impress Duryodhan when advanced by Krishna at Hastinapur. Reluctantly had Krishna advised war to the Pandavas as the last honourable course left to them to vindicate right and justice. Arjun and Yudhishtir had both readily agreed. Then why should Arjun now take up this attitude once so unceremoniously rejected by profound masters of wisdom like King Yudhishtir and Lord Krishna apparently with his approval, the more so when we recall to mind that he had given battle to Duryodhan's forces which included him, his brothers, Bhishma, Drona, Krip, and other warriors, at Viratnagar, without the least hesitation quite recently?

**Answer.**—This affection for Kin was due to no sudden dawn of new wisdom as a result of Arjun's recollection of young days spent happily with his cousins, nor of other good turns by the Kurus done in the long past. For the relations were bitter indeed since early childhood, and the Pandavas had the most unpleasant memories of past Kuru behaviour. There was nothing in their past conduct to soften in any way the Pandava heart. And their latest attitude of audacious

effrontery and rejection of the just claim of their cousins, in the intoxication of power was enough to steel any heart into an attitude of self vindication. Arjun had fought his Gurus (preceptors) and Kurus at Virât-nagar for an object, i.e., rescuing the cows of King Virat. He had never doubted his ability to defeat the enemy and gain his end.

But on this occasion seeing a huge allied army led by mighty warriors of virtue in league with vice, he became nervous, *nonetheless so because of the momentous consequences of victory or defeat to the fortunes of his family, and became doubtful of complete victory against such heavy odds.* The startling shock caused his collapse and being a cultured man of refined feelings, slaughter of kinsmen under such circumstances appeared to him futile and therefore sinful. The avoidance of the charge of family destruction or hostility to friends appeared as a symptom of the disease buried in his within, to still make him appear superior to the Kurus at least on the moral plane. Egoism was out to extricate Arjun from this tangle by suggesting to his wounded dignity a moral victory against the hated and sinful Kuru, for whom there is no good word said in these Shlokas. Indeed the descriptive contrast makes the Kuru appear as a horrible monster of iniquity.

The real cause was *the uncertainty of fulfilment of cherished desires because of doubt as to victory* usurping the place of confidence in his heart. So egoism forgetting its own past justified flight from battle on grounds which to its carped vision appeared quite satisfactory and sufficient. It is seeking to give a certificate of virtue to Arjun in this Shloka as a sop.

### Consequences of Family Destruction

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।  
 धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥ ४० ॥  
 अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।  
 स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्णसंकरः ॥ ४१ ॥  
 संकरो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।  
 पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥ ४२ ॥  
 दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसंकरकारकैः ।  
 उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥ ४३ ॥  
 उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।  
 नरके नियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥ ४४ ॥

*By family destruction are destroyed the ancient  
 family traditions,  
 On destruction of traditions, vice grips  
 the whole family. 40*

*When vice prevails, O Krishna, family ladies  
 become immoral.*

*From corrupt females issues forth O Varshney,  
 the evil of caste confusion. 41*

*This evil is damnation for the destroyers and  
 the family as well,*

*For their ancestors fall, too,  
 deprived of rice-balls and libations. 42*



after the lapse of 13 years inspite of the intervention of Krishna and the advice of their councillors, they were guilty of a gross breach of faith, totally destructive of the high name of this ancient royal house. In fact their wicked conduct had led to the present war.

There could be no question of the family becoming extinct, because there was family tradition regarding the means by which it could be continued. Kunti was alive and there were many young princesses, one of whom actually pregnant at the time. Fight with the Kurus was essential to retrieve the lost family name and reinstate family tradition and usage by awarding them condign punishment for their wicked deeds. Indeed they were so heinous in the eye of customary law that Kuru life (Atatai)\* was forfeit in the hands of any Kshatriya (warrior).

How is it then that Arjun advances the argument, that killing of Kurus involved the sin of destruction of family, its tradition, and the vice of caste confusion, leading the family including dead ancestors into eternal damnation?

**Answer**—Arjun had lost all control over his mind and reason, "*my mind is whirling*" (Sh. 1-30). Doubt had taken hold of his heart and the idea uppermost in his mind was to avoid purpose-less slaughter of kinsmen. All other faculties having failed, egoism came to his rescue and ignoring the true cause, as injurious to his vanity, giving room for comment to his supporters and

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\*Whether he be a preceptor, an old man, or a veda-knowing Brahman, if he comes in front as an Atatai (desperado) he should be killed on the spot without thought. There is no sin involved in killing a desperado. (Manu. Ch. 8, Shlokas 350, 351).



sincere joy to the Kurus, it at once dug out from memory, the latest plausible arguments in favour of this attitude. False, they undoubtedly were, as rationally considered they would have led to a conclusion the exact opposite of what was desired. But Arjun had lost all power of discrimination and was wholly unable to see their fallacious nature, or the conclusions to which they really led. It was if anything the rambling of a lost head. His reasoning indicates a total failure of memory and reason and the reign of egoism, indiscriminately drawing upon the blind reservoir of past impression (Chit) to fulfil its immediate purpose, without regard to the rationality of its position. Arjun thus justifies his position by nourishing his shattered self with this moral scruple, imperceptibly set up by his egoism, as a defensive measure against adverse comment or criticism and also to maintain his self pride, so fundamental a trait of mortal existence. It furnished Arjun with a basis to gain moral victory over the Kurus in this, his terrible plight, and he at once began to indulge in self-righteous speech.

### Self-righteous Speech

अहोवत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।

यद्रान्यसुखलोभेन हंतुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥ ४५ ॥

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।

धार्तराष्ट्रा, रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥ ४६ ॥

*Alas! what a terrible sin we contemplated  
 As coveting the joys of dominion, to kill our <sup>committing</sup>  
 kin we made ready. 45*  
*If me the unresisting and unarmed, the armed,  
 Dhritrashtras slay in battle, that for me be better. 46*

संजय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वाऽर्जुनः संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।  
 विसृज्य 'सशरं चापं' शोकसंविग्नमानसः ॥ ४७ ॥

Sanjaya said—

*Having spake thus, Arjun, betwixt the two  
 armies in the car's rear sat  
 Dropping arrow and bow, mind stricken  
 with grief. 47*

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्री  
 कृष्णार्जुनसंवादेऽर्जुनविषादयोगो नाम प्रथमोऽध्यायः ।

End of Chapter the first of the glorious Upanishad,  
 sung by the Lord, the Science of the Supreme, the Scrip-  
 ture of Yoga, the dialogue of Sri Krishna and Arjun,  
 designated THE YOGA OF DEJECTION OF ARJUN.

## CHAPTER II.

### Yoga of Equanimity

अध्याय २

संजय उवाच

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।

विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ १ ॥

**Sanjaya said—**

*To him thus pity-moved, eyes tearful and  
perturbed  
Down-hearted, spake these words, the Slayer  
of Madhu.*

### Krishna's Contempt at Arjun's Dejection

श्रीभगवानुवाच

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।

अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥

क्लैब्यं मास्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।

क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥ ३ ॥

**The Lord said—**

*Whence hath this dejection in critical juncture  
befallen thee,  
Unworthy of a good man, heaven-excluding  
infamy-bringing, O Arjun?* 2

*To impotence ye are not ye, O Partha.*

*It ill-fits thee*

*Casting this base heartfaintness off, get up,*

*foe-harasser. 3*

**Objection**—Why is it that Krishna, noting the distressed state of Arjun, instead of giving a reply to his argument of sin involved in family destruction for the sake of greed and serious consequences thereof, scolds him for dejection referring directly to his sense of pride and pulls him up by arousing his egoism?

**Answer**—Because Krishna knew that the real cause of aversion to fight was depression of spirits supervening loss of self-confidence and not any affection for the Kurus who neither desired nor deserved any consideration at all and killing whom was a Kshatriya's religious duty, so Krishna made an attempt to rouse his warrior spirit by direct exhortation to give up dejection as something unclean, and the appeal was effective, for the old line of reasoning escaped clean out of Arjun's mind. He made an attempt at justifying flight on a narrower ground.

### Killing Preceptors a Sin

अर्जुन उवाच

कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन ।

इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥ ४ ॥

गुरुनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्

श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।

हत्वार्थकामास्तु गुरुनिहैव

भुञ्जीय भोगान्नुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५ ॥

Arjun said—

*How in battle, Bhishma and Drona, I shall,  
O Slayer of Madhu,  
With darts attack [them] fit for worship,  
O striker of foes? 4*

*Not killing the preceptors honourable souls  
'tis better eating begged food on earth.  
Killing wealthcraving teachers here,  
should we enjoy pleasures stained with blood? 5*

This argument was however fallacious as he had just a short time before given battle to them all at Viratnagar\* and defeated them. Further these preceptors were knowingly siding with Duryodhan for pecuniary reasons against their best moral judgment. Bhishma himself had confessed to Yudhishtir that the

\*Arjun's battles with Kripacharya, Dronacharya and Bhishma are described in Chapters 57, 58, and 64 respectively of Virat Parva. All the three suffered defeat at his hands. Kripacharya was struck on the breast by Arjun, and after a fight with his mace retreated under cover of his infantry. Drona's retreat was covered by his son Ashwatthama. Bhishma was actually wounded on the breast and removed senseless from the field by his charioteer.

Sh. 51—63. Then there ensued an encounter between these two foremost of men worked up with anger and striking each other, like that between celestials and demons. . . . there took place a great encounter between Drona and Arjun like that between Vali and Vasava : : . . . —(Virat, Ch. 58, Dutt's Tr., p. 66.)

Sh. 13—19. The Kuru warriors with their soldiers witnessed that encounter between Bhishma and Partha attacking each other with darts. Partha shooting arrows with both the hands, the Gandiva bow looked like a continuous circle of fire. The son of

Scriptural saying that "this man is a slave of his interest, but the interest is slave to none," is true without doubt, I am also tied down to the Kurus swayed by this self-interest. And Scripture strictly enjoins forsaking a preceptor who is tainted by egoism, who is unaware of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done and who follows a path forbidden by it. Arjun's preceptors were all guilty on these counts and therefore entitled to no consideration at all. And it is quite clear from Arjun's argument in Chapter I that he was quite at home in current Shastric learning and tradition. He realised the inherent weakness of this new position, specially before a master of wisdom like Krishna, and gave up this abortive attempt at suppression and came out with the true cause which had wrought this remarkable change in him.

Kunti enveloped Bhishma with hundreds of arrows like a cloud covering the mountain with rain. Bhishma with his own arrows counteracted that shower of arrows like banks resisting the surging deep and covered Arjun with shafts. These shafts sundered into a thousand pieces fell on Arjun's car. . . . . He then pierced Bhishma with a hundred sharpened shafts.

Sh. 20. The smiling Vibhatsu (Arjun) with sharp shafts furnished with vulturine feathers cut off the bow of Bhishma resembling the sun in effulgence.

Sh. 21. Then with ten shafts Dhananjaya (Arjun) the son of Kunti wounded him, brave as he was on the breast.

Sh. 22. Thus assailed; the powerful son of Ganga stood leaning for a long time on the pole of the car.

Sh. 23. Beholding him senseless his charioteer remembering his instruction took away the mighty car-warrior.

Thus ends the sixty-fourth chapter, the defeat of Bhishma in the Goharana, Virat Parva — (Virat, Ch. 64, Dutt's Tr., p. 72.)

## Confession: Victory Doubtful—So Slaughter Sinful

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो

यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।

यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम-

स्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥६॥

*Nor to us is clear which is the stronger  
Whether we win or they defeat us.  
Whom having slain we shouldn't care to live  
They stand facing, the sons of Dhritrashtra.\* 6*

Arjun has now made a clean confession. His egoism was so far making a desperate attempt to hide the doubt as to victory which had arisen in his mind and brought about the collapse, and to dress up the mental wreckage in attractive moral vesture. But Krishna's powerful shake shatters it and he stands naked before the Master, a soul abiding in a disjointed ruin, its parts—body, senses, mind, reason, sub-conscious (*Chit*) and egoism—all in a state of rebellion, out of control.

## Arjun's Distress—The Problem Before Krishna

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः

पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसमूहेताः ।

यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे .

शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥७॥

\* The true place of this shloka is after Sh. 27 of Chap. I. There is a gap there, which it fills. It is only after the survey which

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्याद्-

यच्छोकमुच्छ्रोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।

अवाप्य भूमावसप्तनमृद्धं

राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥८॥

*By the taint of helplessness is overcome*

*my (warrior) nature.*

*I pray thee with mind confused as to duty.*

*Whatever be proper that ye tell me definite,*

*Disciple thine, do teach me who has sought thee. 7*

*For I see not, it would remove my grief*

*Which withers the senses,*

*Even if I attain, of earth, without foes and*

*flourishing*

*The kingdom, aye of the Shining ones,*

*the lordship. 8*

Arjun's mental state may be ideally summarised thus:—

I know not what I am. I know not what I should do. I am ignorant of myself, of the field of my activity, the Universe, and my relation thereto or my place in it. So I am unaware of the basis of man's relations with other beings and I don't know how to react to a given set of circumstances. The mental machinery has downed tools, it won't work, and I know not how to bring it under my bidding. So I seek thy shelter, master, come to my rescue. I am thy disciple. Do give me proper

drives him to the conclusion given in line 1 of this shloka that Arjun is overcome by delusion for kin, and then arrives at the conclusion given in line 2.



instruction. My grief over this strange tangle is so great that I am unable to find my way out. Torn between doubt as to realization of my cherished desires which have dominated my being these thirteen years and the feeling of sinfulness in certain slaughter of kinsmen in case I fight, my whole being is so saturated with sense-withering grief that, even the lordship of the three (Lokas) regions is not temptation enough to induce me to fight under these conditions. No ideal constructions of future enjoyments have any effect, for how is their materialisation possible except through victory? And victory! aye, there is the rub.

Such was the formidable problem before the Lord of senses, a problem of synthesis linking and co-ordinating the constituents of the disjointed organism called Arjun—soul, body, senses, mind, reason, sub-conscious and egoism—into a personality. Soul was the constant factor, aware of his tools and of his helpless state. Knowledge of self and knowledge of duty was sought. But knowledge of duty involved a knowledge of the world—the field of duty, and its relation thereto. This meant a knowledge of the creative and sustaining Power behind himself and the world. Or how else could the nature and limit of human action be determined?

Thus the problem resolved itself into three distinct propositions compelling immediate solution—

- (1) What is the embodied self (soul and body) and what the inter-relation of the components?
- (2) What is this universe, the field of man's activity, his relation thereto, and the nature of his activity therein?

- (3) What is the basis of individual and universal activity, what is the nature of the creative and sustaining Power, and its relation to both the activities and both the entities, man and the universe?

### The Situation

संजय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परन्तपः ।

न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥६॥

**Sanjaya said—**

*Having so spoken to the Lord of senses,  
The lord of sleep, harasser of foes,  
Said, "I will not fight," O Govind, and became  
silent. 9*

What is the situation? Warriors are impatient for the order to begin battle, enemy in a mood of victory, no time for Krishna to lose, every moment precious, if Arjun lost all lost. Vice and brute force would then reign supreme, and virtue receive a shattering blow at the hands of evil. For "howsoever the virtuous behave, so doth the world follow. Whatever standard they set up, men unquestioningly obey" (Ch. III, Sh. 21). What tremendous consequences! What an effect on the common folk, unhinging their minds! What an example to mortals, frail and liable to temptation even under the most favourable of conditions, let alone these! What a blow to womankind! Draupadi's virtue profaned, her comely modesty outraged by brute man consumed by ill-will and spite.

This the position, these the stakes. The patient a heaving mass of matter, the disease,—the Problem of Life, the problem of all problems, needing an effective and instantaneous cure, if all was not to be lost for ever. Everything turned upon the effect of the treatment. A tremendous responsibility upon the doctor, enough to weigh down the mightiest intellect and give him a grave expression if not greatly disturb his poise. Not a task accomplished of a frail mortal but one worthy of a spiritual giant. Verily one who accomplished it could claim to be man's idol and guide for all time. Wouldn't he have to be a model of equanimity of being, of clarity of thought, of soundness of judgment, of lucidity of expression and perfect knowledge, lord and master of the mental machinery of the body-engine, or how else would he preserve poise in the midst of a situation so complicated, so momentous and so alarming? Now what is the state of our teacher?

See, no disturbance is visible, there is perfect calm within, for there is a smile on the lips. No time has been lost. The Master is ready to meet even this situation with absolute confidence as to the result.

The contrast between the two is sharp and telling. The one is master of the senses in absolute command of the body-chariot, a true charioteer, with reason and mind ready to respond to one of the most urgent and delicate calls ever made—the solution of the riddle of life—amidst surroundings so inharmonious. The other is a breathing lump of clay, grief overwhelmed, ignorant, control over self totally gone. The one sure thing in the midst of this wreckage he is aware of, is his own presence and existence. He is aware of the *I*.

So this, the nature and attributes of which he may understand of his own immediate experience without employment of mind and reason, is taken up as the starting point of the teaching. It should also serve to dispel the delusion as to kinsmen too.

### Krishna Commences the Teaching

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।  
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥ १० ॥

*Then the Lord of senses, as if smiling,  
O Bharat,  
Betwixt the two armies, to the sorrowing  
Arjun spoke these words: 10*

### SANKHYA-YOGA

#### ARGUMENT No. 1

[Sh. 11-18. Self Eternal—Body Transient]

*Temporal Relations have an End. Self is Constant*

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।  
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ ११ ॥  
न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।  
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥ १२ ॥

### The Lord spoke—

*For those who deserve no grief thou grievest  
And words of wisdom thou talkest;  
Over what evolveth and dissolveth ever,  
grieve not the wise. 11*

*It isn't that before I verily was not, nor you,  
nor these princes;  
Nor again that we all shall cease to be hereafter. 12*

Relations of the present incarnation to kinsmen or preceptors and all else last only till the termination of life's sojourn in the body. For on assumption of another body new relations of the same nature spring into existence with other embodied souls and environment, involving new duties and obligations. How can relations of this type be permanent attaching to free souls, when they are assuming different bodies in different surroundings at different times? Relations, kinsmen and preceptors die at different times and assume bodies in different parts of the Universe according to their unexhausted action. "Many are the times we have all been together in the past, as also separate and so again shall it be in future. Even as a heap of grain removed from granary to granary ever assumes new order of arrangement and new combination, so do the Jīvas (souls) in the Universe through this arrangement."\*

Arjun forgetting the eternity of soul and changing nature of the body in which the soul remains encased for a period, had begun to act as if these temporary relations were permanent and everlasting and

\*Yoga Vashishth, Chap. II, Tr., Mystic Experiences: Bhagwandas



For those who deserve no grief thou grievest.  
And words of wisdom thou talkest;  
Over what evolveth and dissolveth ever, grieve not the wise. 11



did not cease with dissolution of the body. He became oblivious of the fact that his manifold relations with this world in his present life were the result of past action, which when exhausted puts an end to the relation, that all these relations involved mutual rights and duties, that breach of duty by one automatically released the other party from corresponding obligation; and that these relations were not meant for exploitation of those who faithfully desired to do their part by others who had no such intention.

Every manifested object we see in nature is liable to change sooner or later. There is no permanence, nature being in perpetual motion, ever bringing about changes in manifested phenomena. Change is inherent in it, it would not be itself without the change. So what is inevitable is hardly a matter worth grieving at. It leads to no gain and causes unnecessary mental strain. A reflective nature would not do so.

This however only applies to the body-form. So far as souls are concerned, they are eternal and indestructible. As souls, those who were facing Arjun could not die for they were all immortal. What is called death is nothing more than disintegration of matter and energy focussed as body round the soul into constituent materials which with little concern enter into new combinations with other portions of nature elsewhere.

### *Body Chariot*

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।

तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मय्यति ॥ १३ ॥



*As to the embodied seated in this body are  
 infancy, youth and decay,  
 Even so is the acquisition of another body,  
 therein, is the self-poised not deluded.\* 13*

Starting life's sojourn as a tiny drop in the womb, and gradually assimilating food there, the I develops a body with organs and commences his career in this world one day. He goes on adding to his physical size and develops the mind by assimilation of food. The body grows for a period (childhood), then remains mature for a period (youth), then decays (old age), and finally dissolves. The soul then commences the journey again in the drop developing another body and so on in eternal continuity.

**Objection**—How do we know that soul is not dis-integrated along with the body, but is something separate therefrom?

**Answer**—Throughout the changes of the body from a drop to full stature the soul knows and identifies himself to be constant and unchanged. It is obvious then that what he builds subsequent to his conception in the womb, by assimilation of food materials must be separate from him. That is but so much, (1) water, (2) air, (3) grains, (4) vegetables, (5) butter, (6) milk, (7) meat and spices or other food materials retained out of the large quantities consumed during waking life. It is these materials which by transformation within, are being built up into muscle, bone, marrow, nerves, flesh, skin, blood, phlegm and so on, in the ever-active laboratory, itself built of the same materials. *A priori* what can be so built up by assimilation should

be liable to be pulled down by dissimilation. This is just what happens in every one's experience. Doesn't disease bring about substantial alteration in the body-weight without the self (or man) ever losing his identity as dweller within throughout these changes? Voluntarily the same result is brought about by fasting. And again the old conditions are restored by resumption of normal diet. The body is thus a dwelling of the soul which he builds for himself. It is never the same even for two consecutive moments, as it is always changing. The soul seated therein through the phenomenon of memory keeps a consciousness of the continuity.

**Question**—What is the purpose and function of the body?

**Answer**—It serves as the soul's medium of knowledge of the world without and of contributing the soul's quota of return service to it. Its various parts perform definite functions in connection therewith. There is perfect division of labour. There are the five senses of knowledge—eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin, with the mind, reason, sub-conscious, and egoism, with which the soul knows himself, the world and the Supreme Eternal; there are the five organs of action—hands, feet, tongue, penis and anus, with which he performs his duties to himself and discharges his obligations to the world without; then there are the digestive, breathing and other organs which keep the body aggregate in working order and supply the requisite energy for work. It is altogether a most elaborate mechanism. But in essence all parts are really built up of the five elements—air, water, fire (energy), earth, and ether (Akash), and their subtle forms, in various combina-

tions. Now these very five are the constituents of the Universe in which man moves. All manifested objects whatever their nature, form, or use are products of these five. During waking life man is assimilating these in the form of food, air and water, building up his body, replenishing the waste, and throwing out unassimilated portions in the form of breath moisture, perspiration, urine, faeces, etc. So that throughout waking life there is constant interchange going on between man's body and the universe without. The elements outside and their products are ever influencing the body by their constant contact with the senses.

*Physical Objects Affect the Body only  
Preserve Poise*

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्ण सुखदुःखदाः ।

आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ १४ ॥

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।

समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५ ॥

*The sense-contacts (objects), O Kunti-born,  
cold, heat, pleasure, pain do give  
Ever-changing, transient,  
them doth thou bear, O Bharata. 14*

*Whom these worry not, the man, best of men,  
Equanimous midst grief and joy, and stable,  
is meant for life everlasting. 15*

**Question**—How do external objects bring about heat, cold, pleasure and pain in the body, and why does man feel pleasure and pain?

**Answer**—Contact of objects with the senses gives

rise to sensation in man, which is interpreted variously and gives rise to heat, cold, pleasure and pain. Since this contact is an ever-recurring phenomenon in waking life, the body is always receiving diverse impressions. Out of this total some are able to claim attention of the mind and rise into consciousness and are there judged by the understanding. It decides for or against the object causing the sensation. If judgment is favourable, there springs up a feeling of pleasure, if unfavourable, then a feeling of pain in relation to the object. A desire is created in the mind to react suitably and the organs of action act accordingly. The mind of man, as all know from their own experience, is restless as the wind. It roams about in the midst of objects with lightning speed, liking some and disliking others, revolving in ever-changing moods.

Sense-objects serve the needs of the body-machinery only, in one form or another. The soul apart from body-needs has no use for objects. The body is at his disposal as a means to an end and not as an end in itself. So its needs should really be determined by the soul and should be subject to his judgment and direction. But the body has assumed the false and unnatural status of an end in itself. The soul has reduced himself to a position of slavery to a tool of his making and identifying himself with its wants goes through the experience of pleasure and pain according as they are satiated or not.

***Grieve Not for the Perishing Body, Fight***

नास्ततो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।

उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ १६ ॥



the Selves abiding within; therefore an urge to Arjun, to fight forsaking all false notions of attachment to kinship.

[Arjun does not respond—the argument remains ineffective—Sh. 19-25. Further elucidation]

*Nature of the Self: What is Death?*

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।  
 उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥ १६ ॥  
 न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि-  
 न्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।  
 अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो  
 न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥ २० ॥

*He who views this as the slayer and he who  
 treats this as the slain;  
 Both are not-knowers for he slayeth not nor  
 is slain. 19*

*He's neither born nor dieth ever, nor having  
 been shall ever cease to be.  
 Unborn, constant, eternal and ancient,  
 remains undestroyed on body-destruction. 20*

**Question.**—How does the body die?

**Answer.**—Body is composed of the five elements, themselves made of minute particles called corpuscles which are perpetually in a state of vibration. During life the human body takes in a quantity of these particles as foodstuffs and by its own peculiar process of assimilation gives them definite form, blood, bone, flesh, mucus, etc., by formation of new compounds. After death the

body is still there. There is no change in the nature of the five elements composing it, but it has lost the power of absorbing the particles and building them up into its system. The particles, indeed, are active as ever within the body, but their activity now takes the form of decomposition of the aggregate into its components unlike before when this activity showed itself in respiration, assimilation, circulation and evacuation. It was an integrating activity. The external forces operate in the body as before, but their effect is radically different. A moment before the activity was purposive, directed from within. Now the same is directed from without and its object is disintegration. There has been a change of agency governing the body-activity.

This shows that there was a selecting agency, which appropriated the foodstuffs into the body and giving them new forms focussed them round itself for its own purpose. It imposed its own will on the portion of matter and energy so absorbed. This material assuming the form of hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose, etc., began to act in a particular fashion. This entity guarded the body against the effect of natural forces by taking adequate precautions. It kept the body-parts bound together in an organic unity. Suddenly all this activity directed from within stopped and decomposition began. Why is it so? Because this integrating focussing agency ceased to act.

Death therefore is withdrawal from the body of this something which integrates the particles of matter, thereby bringing about its decomposition.

**Question**—Is there an indestructible agency existent apart from the body and left over after its dissolution?

**Answer**—The aforesaid consideration necessitates the existence within the body of a selecting agency which is constantly acting upon matter and energy without. This intelligent selecting agency never departs from its distinctive individuality and with unerring exactitude gives the same shape and form to the body by assimilation from without. No man ever turns into a goat, nor a pigeon into a crow. In all beings we find a distinct selecting agent with characteristic properties. Forms may differ, but the growth of all is by cell-formation and multiplication of same by division. Cell is formed by selective assimilation of matter and energy from without. Somehow organic compounds are formed in ways inexplicable. This property is not visible in the individual components. So beyond question there is a selecting agency active within the body, yet separate from it.

**Question**—Does it come into existence with the body and cease with it?

**Answer**—Particles of matter in the body are held together by concentration of energy which like the water of an eddy in a river is every moment changing. Its quantity too is never constant, weakness and strength alternate. It is indestructible and has a tendency to diffuse, and so disintegration of body means its diffusion into space. So long as absorption of energy by the body goes on it moves, acts and gives signs of life. When it stops death supervenes.



Now the instant after death, energy is present within in the form it was in before death, and so there must be a third agency which brings outside energy and body together in inter-action in a particular form, breathing, during life. For it is clear that energy acts upon the body after death also, but then it disintegrates it and its action appears to be governed differently. This absorbed energy of the body then only changes its form of activity. Neither matter nor energy is destroyed, there is only change of form. Energy being finer operates on matter without being affected thereby. This selective agency is subtler than both, for we see that it governs and controls both according to its laws and gives them shape and form. So these two agents cannot destroy it anyhow. Being finer it is not and cannot be susceptible to their action.

This Universe is as full of these selective agencies either as separate entities or as manifestations of one single agency, as of matter and energy.

Land and water are full of plant and animal life which grows from cells. This selective agency is in operation in cells, for the cell grows by selective assimilation. Then the particles of all objects are in constant vibration. Light, heat, sound, electricity, magnetism, etc., are all forms of the same energy caused by variation in the vibration frequency of the particles of matter. The great naturalist Ernst Haeckel in his book 'Riddle of the Universe' writes as follows:—

"I cannot imagine the simplest chemical and physical process without attributing the movements of the material particles to unconscious sensation." Again, "the idea of chemical affinity consists in the fact that

the various chemical elements perceive the qualitative differences in other elements, experience pleasure or revulsion at contact with them and execute specific movements on this ground." He adds that "the sensations and responses in plant and animal life are connected by a long series of evolutionary stages with the simpler forms of sensation that we find in the inorganic elements and that reveal themselves in chemical activity." This phenomenon results from their capacity to experience sensations and the power to respond to sensations, a manifestation of mentality.

Attraction and repulsion govern the formation of compounds in material forms. Crystals form a link between cells and the inanimate world. There is clear evidence of selective arrangement of particles in a compound in a particular fashion. Thus we see a selective agency in operation everywhere, where matter and energy are operating. So this agency becomes all-permeating like matter and energy.

Every substance is a compound made up of constituents. On disintegration the substance ceases to exist, and the constituents assume existence in their own form which is entirely different.

Now if something is always resolved into other some things on destruction and never into nothing and if the product of nothing can only be nothing and not something, then, this selecting agency which obviously has existence when associated with the body, if it is not left over after its dissolution can only be resolved into something else of a different form or shape at the most, like its associate, the body. It cannot be resolved into

nothing. For we know that the universe always remains full of this selecting agency and is in truth its field of operation.

If it is reduced to nothing though matter and energy remain, then how does nothing again create itself into something with definite selective properties? Without components, who gives this product of nothing these properties? How does it acquire them? The conclusion is irresistible that this selective agency too is constant, indestructible, in its essence and equally all-pervading.

**Question**—What is its nature?

**Answer**—Matter and energy, it is not. Is it something mental then? Mind-machine consists of (1) senses, (2) mind, (3) reason, and (4) egoism.

Senses are organs which carry information of outside objects to the self. But unless mind co-operates with them, sensation cannot pass into consciousness, mind controls sense-action. The mind in its turn is restless and wandering like the wind. Its tendency is to keep man's being disturbed. It becomes necessary to bring it under control by reason. So reason is the subtlest and its action of a superior authority. The function of reason is to check the value of different desires surging up within, and serve as guide to the motor-force which strives to fulfil them by adopting suitable means. It determines what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Now man, when he decides upon anything as worthy of attainment, never feels that he is doing it for the use of reason but always for himself. He never thinks of reason as the I.

Nor is it egoism, because even when a man swoons away, or is fast sleep though there is no consciousness of the *I*, we see that it is within the body in full command? In these states egoism is absent, it is in play only during consciousness to emphasise his separation and existence as an entity in the world.

All these except egoism are mental organs like the physical organs performing their assigned functions under the direction of an agent within.

This agency therefore is without size or form, unlike anything that we find in manifest nature. It is inside the body as the dominus, to use it for its purposes. This is called the soul or self in man. If the self is ignorant of his nature and is inactive and inalert then the body-machine passes into the dominion of outside factors. They manipulate it for their purposes and rule the self also through it. Ordinarily man's activity is not really determined by the self. Experiencing this always he begins to look upon the world as the eternal reality, governing and ruling him in everything and is overawed by it. The senses become the real ruler, and finding reason which is not directed by the self in command they go wherever they please and the self finds himself immersed in a sea of bewildering amazement. The senses drag him away and away from a knowledge of himself. With attention fixed in the without, with never a thought of the within he comes to look upon the universe as supreme, which changing constantly keeps him disturbed and discontented. Though constantly troubling and giving pain, it keeps the attention

of the self absorbed in itself. All his attention is directed to adjusting himself to it, so as to get relief from the pain he finds himself surrounded by, as that seems the only *raison d'être* of existence to this self ignorant as he is of his true nature.

Immersed in a sea of change, constant and uninterrupted and seeing his body change the self gets bewildered and begins to imagine that he manifested in this body is liable to the same change, to which has been given the name of death. For disintegration of body-matter to his mind leaves nothing behind as a separate entity. He has forgotten himself. He thinks of himself only in terms of body-activity and hence fear of death. But being eternal and deathless in essence he exhibits this fundamental trait of deathlessness in his *will* to live. As he does not think of himself as an entity apart from the body he inoculates himself with a constant dread of body dissolution which he therefore wants to retain at all costs, hence fear of slaying and being slain. This however is an entirely erroneous attitude, adopted by those who know not.

### *Self and Body Relation*

वेदाऽविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।

कयं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं वार्तयति हन्ति कम् ॥२१॥

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय

नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-

न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥२२॥



The soul therefore is unaffected by body-changes, or the five elements. As there is nought else besides, he cannot be annihilated. Being without form and not made of the elements he is not the subject of the senses, mind or reason, and therefore inconceivable. But he should be known as the one who experiences taste, color, smell, sound and sex-copulation when confined in the body, he it is who cognises the states of sleep and wakefulness and who contemplates that after body dissolution he is going to survive, knowing that this body once was a tiny mass and has grown to its present proportions by his own activity, ever changing, with him as the constant unchanging entity, enjoying the change.

**Objection**—After knowing the nature of the self, there could be no question of any delusion troubling the mind of Arjun. *That was the sole reason advanced by him against engaging in battle, then why did he not get up to fight specially when he had got what he asked for, namely, Krishna's definite opinion as to what he should do?*

**Answer**—Delusion as to sin in killing kinsmen was not the only cause, and so knowledge of their eternity did not remove the poison which was corroding Arjun's heart. Kinsmen were eternal as souls may be perfectly true, but that in itself was no ground for destroying their bodies without cause. If bodies disintegrate, let them do so in their ordinary natural course, why should he become the instrument of their destruction without rhyme or reason? On this argument standing alone, every life would be forfeit and universal chaos would result. Nor does holding equilibrium while killing the Kurus serve as a reason for the fight. If treating the

act of killing itself as an inevitable necessity not worth grieving fitted Arjun for immortality so could maintaining equilibrium in desisting from the act of killing by checking the influence of external contacts upon his mind, which were urging him into this act, fit him for it. The argument lacked a base, it therefore fell flat. It only gave rise to the question, why should he become the cause of dissolution of their bodies?

*(Argument No. 1 concluded. There is still no effect.)*

### ARGUMENT No. 2

अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।

तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैनं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२६॥

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।

तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२७॥

अव्यक्तादीनि भूताणि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।

अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥२८॥

**[Sh. 26-28. Nature in Perpetual Flux—Grieve Not for the Change]**

*Or if him ever taking birth doth thou regard,  
and always dying  
Even then, O Mighty-armed, for him ye  
shouldn't grieve. 26*

*Of the born is death certain, certain is rebirth  
of the dead,  
So for the inevitable, ye shouldn't feel distressed. 27*



*Unmanifest is the primal state of beings,  
manifest is their mid-state, O Bharat,  
Unmanifest again the end. What is there  
then to grieve? 28*

### **The Self a Wonder of Wonders: Eternal and Changeless**

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-

माश्चर्यवद्ब्रूदति तथैव चान्यः ।

आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति-

श्रुत्वाऽप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥२६॥

देही नित्यमवव्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।

तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥३०॥

*Marvellous doth one regard him,  
Wondrous doth another speak of,  
As a wonder doth another hear of,  
Having heard of even, no one verily knows. 29  
The dweller is constant, undying,  
in bodies all, O Bharat,  
Therefore for creatures ye shouldn't care to  
mourn. 30*

(Argument No. 2 ends)

ARGUMENT No. 3

[A Kshatriya's natural duty is to engage in righteous war, departure therefrom brings disgrace]

**Righteous War Open Door to Heaven**

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।

धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥३१॥

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।

सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥३२॥

*Your own duty, regarding, you should cease  
to waver  
Than righteous war nought better is for a  
warrior deemed. 31*

*Coming unsought as an open door to heaven  
Lucky warriors, O Partha, get such a fight. 32*

Discussion of mortality or immortality of the soul apart, Arjun was a born warrior and was so by profession and training as well. Duty therefore enjoined upon him to shed off fear, and fight, because so far as the Pandavas were concerned the cause for which the battle was being waged was righteous and just. It was Arjun's duty to kill the (Atatai), desperadoes, and to avenge wrong. Fight alone was consistent with the noble traditions of his house he claimed to be so jealous of.

### ***Refusal to Fight Means Everlasting Disgrace***

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।

ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥३३॥

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।

सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥३४॥

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।

येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥३५॥

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।

निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥ ३६ ॥

*But if thou in this righteous war won't  
engage*

*Then abandoning natural duty and  
good name, thou wilt incur sin. 33*

*Thy ill fame will be talked of by men for ever  
For one esteemed, disrepute is worse than  
death. 34*

*From fear, fled from battle would  
consider thee, the great warriors,  
And highly esteemed now, by them thou  
wilt be lightly held. 35*

*Thine enemies shall utter many derogatory  
expressions  
Belittling thy capacity, than this can there be  
anything more painful? 36*

There is a fervent appeal with reference to things which normally interest a royal warrior of Arjun's fame to win him over.

### **Two Alternatives, Call to Arms**

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥ ३७ ॥

*If killed in action to heaven, if victorious  
thou wilt enjoy the earth,  
Therefore arise, Kunti-born, to fight with  
resolution. 37*

(Argument No. 3 concluded, there is still no effect )

The whole of the previous teaching is collected together in the form of a formula. This formula is the quintessence of all learning and realisation by man while moving in this world of sense.

### Doctrine of Poise in Action

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।

ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥३८॥

*Attaining poise in joy grief, profit loss,  
victory and defeat  
Get ready then for the fight, thus thou wilt  
not incur sin. 38*

Krishna arrives at this position thus:—

*Sb. 11-25*—Soul is eternal and body transient, like unto a suit of clothes liable to change and deserves no great consideration by itself. As body-needs are no needs of the soul, therefore man should not be affected by them, but treat them as the needs of something apart from him though closely associated. Gain in victory or loss in defeat is ultimately the gain or loss for or of the body, which is not really his loss and does not affect his Self in the least, the same being without form and changeless. So no external considerations as they can affect the body only should weigh with him in determining his decision to fight. Nobody kills or is killed, it is all a change of body form. The process has to be gone through as an inevitable necessity with an equanimous mind.

*Sb. 26-30*—Even if the soul be treated as constantly changing then too there is ground for a fight, for

flight would not stop the inevitable process which goes on like a revolving wheel. Whatever has form must change and give rise to a new form. Nothing in the manifest Universe can remain unmanifest.

*Sb. 31-37*—Looking at it from the point of view of Kshatriya (warrior) duty as enjoined by Scripture for a man in his position there was ground for a fight as war was being waged for a righteous cause.

So on grounds of theory and principle there was an unanswerable case for Arjun to engage in battle in the attitude pointed out in Ch. II, Sh. 38. For that is the right attitude to adopt, knowing that the world of manifest objects but ministers to the body, and pleasure and pain are body affections, quite apart from him—the eternal unchanging Self.

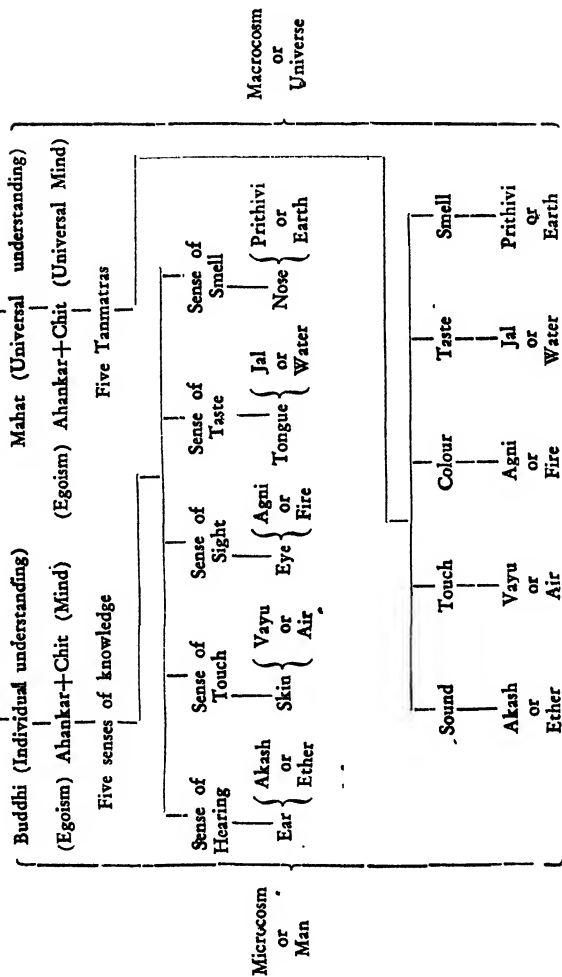
The question, however, still remained why he should adopt this attitude for fight alone and not for flight?

The argument in neither of the three forms furnished a motive for Arjun to engage in battle, except the last one of an offer of the alternative of heaven or enjoyment of kingdom. But that could have no appeal because the uncertainty of victory was still there. Empty offers without something appearing tangible to Arjun in that state of mind and capable of removing his doubt could have no effect.

The first line of treatment of this ideal state of human action by the argument of Theoretical Reason proving ineffective, the master now adopts the second line of treatment that of Practical Reason, to demonstrate its truth.



## (The Supreme) Brahman+Mulprakriti (Unmanifest Nature)



The same five elements which manifest themselves as objects in the world without give their distinctive character to the five senses, of knowledge in man, and establish inter-connection with the world by means of the five distinct properties, viz., sound, color, smell, taste and touch.

The link between man and universe are the senses only. But their action does not lead to sensation unless the mind interests itself, so mind is subtler and more powerful than the senses. Similarly mind though able to invite attention of reason, cannot compel it to act according to its wishes. It may reject the sensation as undesirable or may accept it as desirable and act accordingly. Thus within the body the ultimate authority is that of the understanding or reason. It controls the machinery by which body is brought in contact with the world outside. It can check the influence of outside objects by restraint of the senses. On the other hand outside objects force themselves upon the self by overwhelming reason through the powerful action of the senses, which are in league with them. If the senses are dominated by outside objects, then man becomes a prey to the changing phenomena without, if they are governed by his reason, then he is self-controlled and external phenomena cannot delude him into false paths. So the way to conquer universe is that understanding or reason should control senses through the mind. Understanding, being a mere tool can only act under direction. There are only two directing agencies, the self and the not-self (body and world without). If directing agency is the self then reason acts with uniformity under a single direction. While



if directing agency is the world without, then as it is an aggregate of innumerable objects which produce diverse impressions upon the mind inviting a decision, reason becomes the plaything of these innumerable objects. The matter is further complicated by these objects themselves changing, so that while reason is still operating either on the direct impression or its trace in the memory, the change outside is forcing another impression on it. As if this were not enough the body too is undergoing constant change producing a corresponding change in its needs and so in the midst of this tangle, reason becomes thoroughly confused and finds itself wholly unable to handle the situation properly. It assumes as many shapes and forms as the stimuli which bring it into play or influence its action. It becomes endless and many branched (बहुशाखा) It has no time to direct attention within, but is always engrossed in the cravings of the senses and the mind. By origin their director, it ends by becoming their abject and humble slave and unquestioningly responds to their calls, oblivious of the master sitting within. As the calls of the senses and the mind are for the body, the whole machinery begins to live for its own sake and the dweller within, in spite of theoretical learning finds himself helplessly involved in the body affections.

So the problem is how armed with the knowledge of one's eternity and indestructibility as self and the changing and transient nature of the body chariot and physical objects without, man is to rise superior to the body affections, and bear them as something not affecting him, and how he is to mould his activity according to the dictates of his own illumined self without falling

a victim to the play of his senses? Control of mind-machine is the means and this means restoring the position of command to reason, which itself is to take orders from the dweller within, to whom alone it in reality owes allegiance.

Theoretical teaching had failed to restore his mental balance, because, there was nothing in it to give Arjun an idea of how the mind machine worked and how it could be controlled. It was realised that as action in the world without is possible with the body organs only, there should be instruction imparted to get them under control, so that they may make suitable response to the directions of the instructed soul. Reason is the rightful commander of the body chariot, so if reason could be won over, the body machine would come under subjection automatically.

Krishna therefore now takes up the task of explaining how the mental machinery can be so trained and operated as to give rise to the estate described in, II-38 as a normal state of being while man is acting in the world without.

The teaching imparted in this section (Sh. 39—72) appears to be an elaboration of the method of self-realisation taught to Nachiketa in Katha Upanishad (Ad. 1, Balli 3, Sh. 3-9):— :

आत्मानंरथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।

बुद्धिन्तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥३॥

इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।

आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥४॥

यस्त्वविज्ञानवान् भवत्ययुक्तेन मनसा सदा ।  
 तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानिदुष्टाश्वाइव सारथेः ॥ ५ ॥  
 यस्तुविज्ञानवान् भवति युक्तेन मनसा सदा ।  
 तस्येन्द्रियाणि वश्यानि सदश्वाइव सारथेः ॥ ६ ॥  
 यस्त्वविज्ञानवान्भक्त्यमनस्कः सदाऽशुचिः ।  
 न स तत्पदमाप्नोति संसारं चाधिगच्छति ॥ ७ ॥  
 यस्तुविज्ञानवान्भवतिसमनस्कः सदाशुचिः ।  
 स तु तत्पदमाप्नोति यस्माद्भूयो न जायते ॥ ८ ॥  
 विज्ञानसारथिर्यस्तु मनः प्रग्रहवान्नरः ।  
 सोऽध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥ ९ ॥

(3) "Know the self to be occupant of the chariot and the body chariot, reason charioteer and the mind reins."

(4) "The senses have been called its horses and their objects roads. The self united with the mind and the senses is called the enjoyer by the thoughtful."

(5) "He who knows not and whose mind is not in his bidding his senses are out of his control like mischievous horses out of their driver's control."

(6) "But he who knows and whose mind is disciplined his senses are under his control like amiable horses under their driver's control."

(7) "He who is a not-knower and whose mind is not under restraint, and who is impure, he instead of attaining the destined Supreme Goal remains entangled in this mortal plane."

(8) "But he who knows his mind is under control and he is pure, he certainly attains that Supreme Goal whence he is not born again."

(9) "Whose illumined reason is his charioteer, which holds the reins of the mind tight, he arrives at the end of his journey which is the Supreme Abode of Vishnu."

The master with consummate skill has moulded this teaching to suit Arjun's mental condition and has introduced in it a richness of detail which makes his adaptation unique in its impressive grandeur. The fundamental principle of non-fruit-regarding action is ingeniously woven into it and the result is a finished product of exquisite grace. The teaching is rightly named *Buddhi-Yoga* and not *Karma-Yoga* in contrast with *Sankhya-Yoga*, as it is directed to establish the dominion of reason over the complicated machinery of the body and to make reason itself look to the Self within for guidance and direction. And this is to be achieved by destroying the attachment of reason to its old companions, the manifested phenomena of the universe.

### *Its Unique Features*

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।

स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ ४० ॥

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।

बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥ ४१ ॥

*Not in this is loss of effort nor likelihood of  
 harm  
 Even a little practice of this Dharma protects  
 from great fear.' 40*

*In this there is one understanding (reason),  
 of resolute determination, O Scion of Kuru,  
 Many-branched and endless are the  
 understandings of the irresolute. 41*

The essential characteristic of this Yoga of Equanimity is a reason rooted in the Self who is conscious of his eternity and the transient nature of his body chariot—a bread and water composition. In this consciousness the Self remains uninfluenced by the body-affections caused by sense-objects.

The lower ideal of heaven and worldly enjoyment having failed to achieve its purpose, the ultimate ideal of self-abiding Reason is now set before him as the basis of human activity to the detriment of fruit regarding activities which keep reason occupied in the changing phenomena of the universe, causing pleasure and pain to man.

Dharma here stands for Buddhi-Yoga.

Restoration of self-control and no theoretical instruction about the nature of the soul was the way to get round Arjun. For it could be seen that theoretical learning still left the mind wavering (Sh. 31), it could not indicate the means wherewith to enable Arjun to regain his lost equilibrium.

If reason is guided by the Self, then as the Self is changeless and without wants, body-affections and attachments to men and things assume their proper place in man's life-scheme and are not able to dominate it. It

becomes one pointed and its whole action self-consistent. If it is guided by the not-self—body and the world of sense—then in the process of bringing about its adjustment with the Self amidst recurring change, it becomes lost in the maze of body-affections and objects of sense. On account of attachment to these, its action loses self-consistency. Each drags it in its own direction producing a state of interminable mutual conflict which renders equanimity impossible.

## A

**Limitations of Fruit-Regarding-Activity**

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।  
 वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदुस्तीति वादिनः ॥ ४२ ॥  
 कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।  
 क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥ ४३ ॥  
 भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां . तथाऽपहृतचेतसाम् ।  
 व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥ ४४ ॥

*In this flowery speech indulge*  
*the not-knowers*  
*In letter of Veda revellers, "there is nought*  
*else" sayers, 42*  
*Souls steeped in desire, with heaven as their*  
*goal.*  
*It (flowery speech) offers rebirth as the fruit*  
*of action and prescribes*  
*Ceremonies manifold, for securing enjoyment*  
*and power. 43*

*In the pleasure and power devotees,  
   their hearts captivated thereby,  
 The understanding, of resolute determination  
                   in tune with the Divine is not to be found: 44*

There are two main divisions of Veda, Karma Kanda (action) and Gyan Kanda (knowledge). The former comprises the Brahmanas and Samhitās. They deal with ritual and prescribe manifold sacrifices and other modes of attainment of worldly enjoyments and power here and happiness and joy in heaven after body dissolution.

The latter comprises the Aranyaks and the Upanishads. They deal with Reality and nature of the self and the Supreme. The Mimamsiks treat the "Action" section as the true Vedaṣ and regard the "Knowledge" section as of no value. They devote themselves to performance of Vedic sacrifices and follow the rules and procedure laid down for acquisition of pleasures and power here and heavenly enjoyments hereafter. This they regard as the ultimate object of human existence. Ordinary man fascinated by sense-joys is attracted by their panegyrics. Krishna refers to this section of the Vedas in these shlokas and assigns a comparatively inferior position to the Mimamsik doctrine of performing Vedic sacrifice and observing other rules for obtaining desired fruit here and hereafter. As enjoyment of sense-objects can never be an unmixed good and is in its very nature unenduring it leaves a void behind which is the cause of pain and suffering. Then attachment to objects and dependence upon others is a necessary concomitant of all fruit regarding activity. It is impossible for individual man to obtain anything in the way of

worldly enjoyments and possessions without the co-operation of others and without having in possession materials which are ultimately fashioned into desired objects. To enjoy these objects the self has to remain encased in a body-form which involves re-birth. This modelling of life on doctrines discussed in this portion of the Vedas operates as a hindrance to the attainment of liberation from the bondage of birth, which according to Krishna is the true aim of life.

The minds of those who are devoted to pleasure and power are ever busy planning projects for their acquisition. They of necessity become fascinated and absorbed in the bewildering flux of sense-phenomena which keeps them ever restless. Their understanding gets lost in this maze and is unable to attain poise.

## B

### Non-Fruit-Regarding-Activity

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।

निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ ४५ ॥

यावामर्थ उदपाप्ते सर्वतः सम्प्लुतोदके ।

तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥ ४६ ॥

*Of the three qualities the Vedas treat,  
above the three qualities thou grow, O Arjun,  
Free from opposites, ever in thy being rooted,  
untroubled by acquisition and preservation,  
self-controlled. 45*



*Of what use is a reservoir in a place all flooded  
with water,*

*Of same utility are the Vedas to a*

*God-knowing illumined.\* 46*

In the Karma Kanda portion of the Vedas the constitution and structure of the entire phenomenal world has been explained in terms of the three gunas (qualities) of nature—Satva, Raj and Tam. Satva stands for knowledge and balanced purity; Raj for passion and activity; and Tam for darkness and inertia. Every manifest object animate or inanimate has one of these as its predominant feature. As man's body too is constituted of materials drawn from nature, it is also a playground of these three qualities. So long as the self allows himself to be affected by them he remains entangled in the changes of the world of sense-objects. Satva (goodness) is the highest he can attain, but even that keeps him chained to the world by the tie of happiness and mental balance which are its products. He still has to be on guard against the allurements of the world of phenomena, and keep his reason engaged in discriminating between the three classes of activity and to keep Raj (passion) and Tam (inertia) down. His reason and mind play in the Universe without, they are out-directed and not in-directed. This three-quality nature drags man into its ever-revolving vortex giving rise to feelings of pleasure and pain and other pairs like success and failure, gain and loss, heat and cold, etc. It is attachment to nature and sense objects which causes variation in moods. So Arjun is enjoined to rise above these and remain poised in his own true being, above the gunas (qualities).

When a man has attained self-knowledge, i.e., (1) knows himself and his relation to the body, (2) knows the world and his relation thereto, and (3) the creative Power behind both and its relation to both, he is lifted so high that the science of fruit-regarding-action becomes a part of his illumined mental content. He pockets it as a minor acquisition on his way up above the three-quality nature.

**Objection**—But so long as such a man remains in flesh, he cannot cease activity. The body can only live by constant assimilation of food and satisfaction of innumerable wants. He can only meet them by his activity and this activity of his has to be purposive. This means that there is desire for fruit present in his activity. Purposive activity being an inherent necessity of human existence, how can he rise above the three quality nature and treat the science of fruit regarding action as futile? It is necessitated by human wants which every one has so long as he is in flesh and blood, and which can only be met by his own activity properly directed.

**Answer**—A God-knower knowing the essence of things, knows that—(a) Every sentient being is active in this Universe bringing about a change large or small. (b) What in common parlance is called inanimate is also in a state of vibration affecting and being affected by the activity of all sentient life. To him the whole universe appears to be a symphony of music eternal constantly changing tune, the component parts ever bringing about changes by their interaction. The whole is one organic unity of relations. Now if every activity whatsoever affects a change, it is obvious that the con-

sequence or result of any individual activity in the shape of a desired fruit, at any moment of time in the world outside will be a resultant of his own and others' activities going on, unknown to him and which were not duly accounted for or considered by him when he commenced his. The result of *his act* therefore is not solely determined by his activity alone, but by the activity of other sentient beings, and inanimate forces operating under unalterable laws. If his activity conflicts with the activity of others or he acts in defiance or violation of the law of operation of any natural force, its effect will be modified and so in either case the contemplated fruit would not be wholly gained.

A little reflection would show that the result of a particular activity would not necessarily be what man desires or wishes it to be. If it is sometimes so, it is a case of pure accident or a result of foresight, i.e., that he had taken account of all outside factors likely to influence the attainment of the aim or object one way or the other. The more restricted the activity in its effect on outside environment and of a nature not likely to be affected much by external forces, the greater is the probability of successful calculation of the result thereof and *vice versa*. So that having regard to the complex nature of human desires and their varied character a man would require to keep a complete knowledge of nature and its *modus operandi* vividly present in consciousness at all times and would have to be ever on the alert to act on it before he can act knowing that any particular activity of his would lead to the desired result. This attribute of Omniscience, however, is possible only to God. And yet this alone won't

suffice for there must be the power in himself to manipulate all the forces necessary for the contemplated result. He should have authority over them and be all-pervading to be able to watch over the process. Nothing short of absolute dominion and authority over all that is sentient and non-sentient could give him freedom to achieve the anticipated result as a consequence of his activity during waking life.

Man has to possess all the attributes of God as mentioned above before he can fulfil his wishes. He in his present state is not God-like in his attributes and so the Lord tells Arjun that an essence knowing God-knower scarcely bothers himself with Vedic sacrifices or with actions generally regarded as leading to specific fruit. He knows the limit and extent of human activity. It appears puerile to him to engage in action for specific fruit know as he does the limited and finite capacity of man to mould action by contemplated fruits successfully.

NOTE—Arjun however in his delusion was determining his course of action on the basis of anticipatory results according to his limited knowledge and understanding which had resulted in this mental disaster.

His reasons for flight were specious and futile. They could not bear scrutiny, for war was forced by Duryodhan himself in spite of the plainest warnings by Krishna, Bhishma, Drona and Vidur, not to mention Queen Gandhari. Arjun was aware of Krishna's attitude and that of King Yudhishtir. He alone could not without consulting Yudhishtir call off the battle. The final decision could not rest with him. Krishna and Yudhishtir had both decided on war after mature deliberation fully aware of the probable consequences to the future of the family. In fact Arjun himself just an hour before had comforted Yudhishtir by the plea of righteousness of their cause. But later on a survey of the enemy disposi-

tions he himself became doubtful of complete victory, and this reading of the situation combining with the torrential bubbling up of all the pent up emotions from his sub-conscious, which had held his personality in their grip for thirteen years brought about a collapse.

Krishna had tried the ordinary methods of appeal to pride and self-interest and failed. The problem before him was somehow to help Arjun to regain his memory and instal reason in its proper place so that it may restore emotional equilibrium. •

The Lord therefore now plans to divert him from acting with a motive to obtain specific fruit by unfolding a fundamental truth for his benefit.

### Law of Human Action

कर्म्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ ४७ ॥

*In action alone bath thou freedom, but not in  
fruit ever.*

*Act not with fruit motive, nor be given to  
inaction. 47*

Realising Arjun's aversion to fight caused by doubt as to fulfilment of cherished aims Krishna exhorts him to disregard these considerations and engage in battle because of its righteousness without regard to result.

If the method now adopted succeeded in satisfying him that "Action without regard to fruit was a duty and noblest of all," then despair as to realisation of heart's cherished desires would lose its potency and Arjun's mind bereft of doubt and delusion would be itself again, and he the same old Gandiva bowman.

Arjun is therefore advised to act with reason determining his course of conduct according to dictates of

duty, without regard to fruit and not according to the prospect of fulfilling cherished personal desires through victory.

### Definition of Yoga of Equanimity

योगस्यः कुरु कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।

सिद्धयसिद्धयोः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥ ४८॥

*Fixed in Yoga, perform action without attachment, O Wealth-Victor,  
In success and failure equanimous, this equanimity is termed Yoga. 48*

Keeping reason rooted in the self and so poised amidst the changes of the world without that no external considerations of success or failure, gain or loss, or body-affections of pleasure and pain, and of attachment to kin, are able to dislodge it therefrom, and fully operating the body machine in selfless activity for fulfilment of purpose Divine without regard to fruit is called Yoga.

### Fruit-Regarding-Action Contrasted with Selfless Action

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनंजय ।

बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥ ४९॥

*Far inferior is action to poise of Reason,  
O Wealth-Victor,  
In such reason seek shelter, self-blind are the  
fruit-motivated. 49*

*Buddhi Yoga* means union of *Buddhi* (reason) to the self, i.e., self-abiding reason, it is reason of a

particular kind. This reason is essential for non-fruit-regarding activity. Such activity is not possible if reason is dominated by sense-objects.

*Action* here means fruit-regarding-action. This is contrasted with non-fruit-regarding-action, which can only proceed from (बुद्धि) reason which has lost all attachment in objects of sense and has come under the direct domination of the self. It has become unioned with the self within and under the guidance of the self determines body-activity not by prospective gain in the world of sense, but by the demands of the external situation with a view to preserve the beneficent activity of the wheel of nature for the good of all life, and to remove or destroy all factors which cause friction or interfere with its progress. Arjun is therefore advised to cultivate such reason as would enable him to direct the flow of his body-activity along channels for which the Divine has gifted this marvellous machine to man, namely, service of the living. For he who does not do so, but misuses the body for satisfaction of his personal needs, which are but needs of the body alone, is ignorant of his true nature. He is forgetful of his eternity, of the fact that beneficent Providence has created this Universe for his sake and looks after him with promise of a glorious existence, if he but act in fulfilment of the Divine Law of mutual service. Such a person is truly an object of pity, for he knows not this basic principle ordained by God for satisfaction of the needs of all life. He burdens himself with a heavy anxiety for the satisfaction of his desires by his individual activity which, however, is utterly impossible of riddance unless he benefits by *the contributory service of all the*

*rest, though he may not recognise it.* This attitude of ignorance is therefore condemned, and the attitude resulting from poised reason is commended.

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुवृत्तदुष्टौ ।

तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥ ५० ॥

*Endued with poised reason one forsakes (actor  
sense in) good and ill deeds,*

*So strive for this Yoga. Yoga is skill in action. 50*

One who has brought his reason under the bidding of the self, so that the world of sense is not able to swamp it and lead it astray by attachment to some object, arrives at a stage when what are popularly called well-done or ill-done deeds, don't affect him at all for he exults not over the good fruit of the one, nor worries over the bad fruit of the other. His illumined self in fact gives up all idea of agency in the activity of the body. He treats the body as an instrument of the Divine gifted to him for fulfilment of His purpose. His sole function is to prevent it from becoming a plaything of sense-objects. Having secured that by cultivating a poised reason, he attributes all activity of the body to the Divine Actor within. Activity must be there but it should proceed from a consciousness of the Divine operating the body-machine. This is acquired by striving in the Yoga of Equanimity mentioned above. Therefore Arjun is exhorted to acquire this Yoga. For one who has acquired it understands the art of performing action. He becomes an expert in the science of action, as he has grasped the fundamental principle governing all body-action. The final consequence of this glorious acquisition is:—



### *Supreme Value of this Yoga*

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।

जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥ ५१ ॥

*Action-born fruits renounced the sages possess-  
ed of this reason.*

*Freed from birth-fetters, attain the blissful  
state. 51*

Man assumes body-form to enjoy the fruit of his actions. Clinging to fruit is the cause of rebirth. When therefore all action is performed for God's sake in fulfilment of His purpose without desire for fruit, and there is illumination within, that the immortal self is seated in the chariot under divine orders, to work it according to His wish, and not to slave for it, as an end in itself, the bondage of birth is shaken off, and the self, unaffected by the play of nature, devoted to the Supreme, ultimately attains Him.

The advice in the last three shlokas has a direct bearing on the disturbed mental state and confused reason of Arjun, who was torn between doubt as to victory and affection for kin on the one hand and frustration of cherished hopes on the other. He needed restoration of equilibrium.

### *Conditions of Attainment*

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।

तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥ ५२ ॥

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।

समाधावचूला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ५३ ॥

*When this mire of delusion thy reason has*  
*crossed over*
*Then wilt thou grow into indifference to the*  
*"heard" and "to be heard."* 52  
*Scripture bewildered when abides firm*  
*absorbed in self, unmoved, thy reason,*  
*then, wilt thou attain Yoga.* 53

NOTE.—"Heard" and "to be heard" are Scriptural injunctions and traditions.

Reason is a mental tool of the self, yet it attaches itself to outside objects. Why? Because they satisfy the cravings not only of the embodied self but also of those he is interested in out of natural love and affection. These claim immediate attention, and reason has to be ready as driver of the body machine for this service. It seldom gets time to draw within and devote itself to its true ruler (soul) within. Scripture and tradition had taught Arjun as a prime duty to endeavour to make provision for self and family, to have a high regard for personal and family honour and vindicate it at any risk. He had learnt that it was the duty of a Kshatriya (warrior) to give up life itself for establishment of righteousness and justice. It was because of this that he found himself at Kurukshetra. Yet a survey of the enemy dispositions had made him diffident and slaughter of kin appearing purposeless, tradition again produced in him a sense of sin in waging war to destroy them. He was filled with worry and anxiety on account of these conflicting duties enjoined by Scripture and tradition. He was bewildered and in despair. But all this tangle of delusion was due to his ignorance. He disregarded the existence of a beneficent Providence

who looked after him and would have enabled him to discharge all enjoined duties by placing the resources of the entire Universe at his disposal for the purpose, if he but realised the true function of his body machine, namely, offering its service to Him, and not to gratify any personal desire of his own. For if he left God to shoulder this responsibility for him and concerned himself simply with dedicating the body machine for removal of a spoke in the Universal wheel happen what might, then there would be no cause left for worry and anxiety. This achievement was possible only when reason withdrawn from sense objects abided in the self who is without wants, and moved under his direction in non-fruit regarding activity, leaving satisfaction of the body needs, and discharge of temporal obligations to friend and kin to the care of Providence their Creator. Arjun is therefore comforted that all he had to do was to disentangle himself by cutting asunder the network of Scriptural conflict, and cultivate a self-abiding reason. That done he is promised attainment of true equilibrium.

So the real thing is to withdraw reason from its peregrinations in the Universe of phenomena and root it within in the Self, this alone could make it one pointed.

At last the silence is broken. Cultivation of self-abiding reason and poise of being appears a proposition meriting consideration. It could satisfy his self-esteem and give direction to the storm within. So a question is put.

## The Question

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा 'समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।

स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत ब्रजेत किम् ॥ ५४ ॥

**Arjun said—**

*Of one with stable reason absorbed in the Self,  
What is the mark, O Keshav.*

*The man of stable being rooted in the Self;  
How doth he talk, sit, or walk?*

54

The whole problem with Arjun was restoration of the dominion of reason as an immediate necessity. So a very proper question is put to know the model to follow. Now begins the answer, and its comprehensive and detailed exposition.

## Poised Reason or Stable Understanding

श्रीभगवानुवाच

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् ।

आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ ५५ ॥

**The Lord said—**

*When he forsakes all cravings bubbling up in  
the mind,*

*In the Self alone rests satisfied, then he is said  
to be of stable reason.*

55

Well has it been said, man cannot serve both God and Mammon. Mammon is a compendious term for worldly possessions which are many and various. When

man gets entangled in pursuit of these, for its own sake, there is opened the cover of the entire Universe for his reason to enter and roam about in search of means of attainment. At first appearing small, once entry is made the horizon gets widened and widened until it gives such a sense of bewilderment to the self that he gets entirely lost. Reason loses conscious touch with the self and becomes the handmaid of body affections which determine its moves in nature. God and Self, residents of the body tenement are both ignored. Supreme darkness prevails within, and reason, drawn from its sure base within hurls about its dominus, fascinated by the allurements of manifested nature, from object to object.

Therefore when man has withdrawn himself from this game of hide and seek by a supreme effort of will, and self illumined, realising the limit of sense objects to satisfy the body-machine only, finds contentment and joy in his immutable self, his reason having only one object, self to serve becomes one pointed. He is then called a man of self-abiding reason in contrast with the man of ordinary reason bewildered by sense-phenomena.

Here is something offered which can provide an escape from the collapse, worth trying. It is obvious that the effect of this must be soothing to Arjun's distressed soul, as instead of suppressing the complex-formed during exile, it can be exposed and shown to be not deserving of much consideration. It can then be dismissed with a smile as hardly worth worrying about. The master is adopting a unique method. He tackles Arjun by interesting him and beguiling his attention from the tormenting emotion to things of greater

moment, which naturally would have the effect of diminishing its intensity, of restoring the control of reason over his mind, and enabling him to appreciate the teaching. The initial success has been gained by this ingenious device.

### Stable Being

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।  
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ ५६ ॥

*In sorrow whose heart is undistressed, in joy  
Immune from craving,  
Attachment, fear and anger gone,  
He is the Muni\* of stable being.* 56

In the last shloka Krishna considered Man as an actor. In this he considers him as a bearer of body-affections. Once having noted Arjun interested in the question of equanimity of being the Master takes hold of it and deals masterly strokes replete with the highest wisdom to dispel his darkness and depression of spirit, ever emphasising the inimitable superiority of a stable mind, in language terse and appealing, and of exquisite beauty. Every element is a hit at the wretched complex which had brought about the collapse and put everybody in an awkward position increasing Duryodhan's pride and disconcerting to Krishna and the Pandava generals. So the Master leads on.

### Man of Poised Reason: Marks

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।  
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५७ ॥

\*Silent sage

*Who is on all sides unattached, in whatever he  
gets of fair or foul,  
Neither rejoices nor bemoans, his understand-  
ing becometh stable.\* 57*

He who treats the body-needs and body-affections, caused by his environment or obligations imposed by temporal relations of blood, friendship or business as fluctuating phases of mortal existence and simply adjusts himself to the changes affected by them so that he may not be interfered with as he goes about his Master's business of preserving righteousness, in a state of perfect calm, attains poise of reason.

### [Sh. 58-61. Attainment of Stable Reason Through Sense-Control]

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५८ ॥

*Like a tortoise drawing in its members from all  
sides*

*Who withdraws the senses from their objects,  
his understanding attaineth poise. 58*

Sense-control is a means to acquisition of such reason, because then sense objects lose all power of diverting the Self from the service of the Supreme, to service of the body.

### *Effect of Past Enjoyment*

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः । ।

रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ ५९ ॥





is likely to hinder its attainment. The higher the ideal, the greater the necessity as well as the acquisition of sense-control. The highest ideal for man is realisation of his own eternity and refuge in the Supreme in such consciousness. Therefore when one strives after this ideal he gains sense-control and ultimately a poised reason, as below—

### *Stable Reason How Attained*

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।

वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६१॥

*Keeping them in his bidding, in his Self abiding,  
who sits devoted to Me,  
Who has disciplined his senses, his reason  
becomes stable. 61*

### **Analysis of Mental Action. How man Falls**

Now after pointed preliminary observations on reason, senses and their action at last the Master gives an acute analysis of how Arjun, a brave, calm, concentrated, and learned, warrior of noble and refined feelings, with a delicate sense of personal and family honor was transformed into an abject and dejected figure with his whole mental and moral machinery out of gear.

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।

संगात्संजायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥६२॥

क्रोधाद् भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।

स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥६३॥

*By dwelling on objects, therewith, man, con-  
ceives attachment,  
From attachment is born desire, from (thwart-  
ed) desire comes anger. 62*

*From anger ariseth delusion, therefrom confu-  
sion of memory  
From memory confusion, loss of Reason, Rea-  
son gone, the man is lost. 63*

The trouble which leads to man's ultimate break-down starts as he dwells on the pleasant and alluring features of some sense-object and by habitual mental rumination becomes attached to it. He then treats it as something worthy of acquisition and hankers after it. There is an earnest desire that everything outside may favour his efforts at acquisition. Anything that appears to stand in the path as an obstruction calls forth the exercise of extra-energy for its removal which means loss and delay and if sufficiently powerful, disappointment. It gives rise to an attitude of hostility towards itself. The obstruction is resented and the man loses temper. When his mind is thus ruffled, he loses true perspective, minor and unimportant matters brought vividly into consciousness under nervous and emotional excitement assume undue weight and importance in his eyes and he gets deluded. As by assuming false importance these matters are torn off their connecting links in the memory, memory becomes confused, and its function is interfered with. The law of association of ideas does not work properly. The flow of ideas from the reserve stock into consciousness is not regular and even but erratic and haphazard, there is a wave of disturbance through the whole

fabric of memory—warp and woof—and the law of association rakes up materials from all sides as in a dream state. The mind does not get proper materials to enable reason to judge correctly. Reason under these circumstances is unable to give right decision. It is forced to function on material involuntarily bubbling forth from an excited and disturbed sub-conscious and if the emotional excitement is powerful enough, is unable to judge at all and gets lost in a maze. When the driver of the mental machinery of man downs tools then he is rendered helpless. He is nothing but a heaving mass of clay.

It is obvious from this incisive and acute analysis of the genesis of a mental breakdown, that according to Krishna, Arjun's chief trouble was not delusion as to kin, creating in him a strong attachment to itself, for he had not been ruminating over that for years, but the recovery of kingdom, after the period of exile, avenging of wrongs to self and Draupadi, and vindication of family honor, etc., for which he had gradually acquired so strong an attachment that his whole being was in course of time literally filled with them. When he faced the Kuru hosts he realised that they were a very powerful obstacle to the fulfilment of his desires, which he resented. He lost temper and under emotional excitement went into the middle for a survey of enemy strength, where he on making an erroneous estimate, became confused. His memory got out of control and presented such materials before his reason that it was unable to come to a right conclusion and got lost amidst the conflicting data presented to it by a disturbed mind.

Having diagnosed the disease by tracing it to its source, i.e., mental rumination in exile, the way to obtain mental and moral calm is pointed out—

[Sh. 64-65. Peace Through Sense-Mastery]

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।  
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ ६४ ॥

*Who renouncing affection and aversion  
allows the senses to rove in their objects  
Mind under his bidding, conscious of his  
pure self, he attains tranquillity. 64*

Attachment to heart's cherished cravings turns out to be the root cause of Arjun's discontent. Peace and contentment would therefore be restored by pulling this cause by the roots. Mastery of the body-tenement by the self as its dominus, conscious of the transient nature of his relation with it, brings about indifference to desires which are after all body affections, and leads to peace.

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।  
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥ ६५ ॥

*In tranquillity of all suffering is born the  
cessation  
Of the tranquil-minded, the reason soon is  
steadied. 65*

When this mental peace is attained, then there is no feeling of void left which is the sole cause of sorrow, for there is no hankering after sense objects. The senses move under the guidance of an illumined self to

fulfil their assigned tasks. Such a man gains complete mastery over his reason too. Withdrawn from the alluring snares of the world without, it abides in the self and moves in fulfilment of the divine law. But,

**[Sh. 66-67. Disquiet Through Sense-Slavery]**

नास्ति बुद्धिर्युक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना । •

न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥ ६६ ॥

*There is no stable Reason for one without sense-  
control*

*For one without sense-control, there is no  
meditation*

*For the unmeditating there is no peace,  
And where is happiness for the peaceless? 66*

The attack here is direct. Arjun was unsteady without doubt and unreflective. So he is told the plain unvarnished truth, in language of modulated sweetness that he was bound to be peaceless within and therefore miserable and unhappy because of slavery to sense.

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।

तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नाविमिबाम्भसि ॥ ६७ ॥

*For the mind which follows in the wake of the  
senses*

*Rushes the understanding (into its objects)  
Like a gale driving a boat on the waters. 67*

The sight of large forces properly equipped and ably led, thwarting his cherished designs and inmost desires deeply impressed Arjun's mind and uniting with

the suddenly aroused feeling of sin in engaging in purposeless slaughter of kinsmen overpowered his understanding and brought about a total mental and physical collapse drowning him into a sea of grief. And Krishna to his great dismay was seeing the whole phenomenon with his own eyes.

### Conclusion

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६८॥

*Therefore, he, mighty-armed, who has with-  
drawn, on all sides  
His senses from their objects,  
his understanding is poised. 68*

### [Sh. 69-70. Stable Reason Illustrated by] Two Similes

#### (i) Day and Night

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।

यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥६९॥

*What is night for all beings, in that the self-  
controlled keeps awake  
In what are all awake is night for the sage who  
sees. 69*

The spheres of activity of the ordinary man and the self-poised are contrasted. Day stands for activity and night for inactivity. There are two regions, the world of phenomena, and the world of reality, which is the basis of phenomena. Ordinary man moves in the

former ignorant of his true nature. He calls that his waking life. The self-abiding withdrawing his senses from attachment to objects moves in the latter, his self refuged in the Supreme. He calls that his waking life.

The ordinary man is blind to his own reality, his consciousness is wholly inactive in the other region. That is his night. The sage is inattentive to the world of phenomena and is wholly absorbed in the Reality back of all change, his consciousness so to say is inactive in this, his mind is at rest and so he treats this as his night. The one allows his senses to rove without uncontrolled, and lives in the flux of nature constantly affected by it, the other mastering his senses lives within unaffected by the flux.

## (ii) Ocean

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं

समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।

तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे

स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥ ७० ॥

*As into the ocean full still and steady waters go  
on entering  
Likewise desires flow into whom he attains peace  
and not the desire desiring. 70*

Cravings have assumed their proper place in the life-scheme of such a man. They are body-affections and are treated as such. Adequate provision is made for them by engaging the body in activities for which it has been gifted by a beneficent Providence. He is made to look after it. Man's sole function being to

carry out divine orders in the interests of world-harmony. He therefore finding himself caught in the midst of this mighty current of Nature like an eddy, allows it to have its play, and does not impose any individual craving for his body-satisfaction, to interfere with its motion. He sits changeless in the changing flux placing his body-activity at the disposal of the world free from personal desires. The inevitable desires produced by his temporal relations and the need for body-maintenance keep flowing into him without disturbing his balanced calm, for he the self-illuminated knows that if proper they will be satiated by Providence during the course of his selfless activity.

### *Discussion Formulated, Identity With Sh. 38*

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।

निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥७१॥

*All desires abandoned who moves free from  
yearning,*

*"My-ness" and "I-ness" free he attaineth peace. 71*

The way to attain peace is to give up craving, by treating the body as a tool, separate from the self, and the idea of separation from other beings as also the sense of ownership of property in wordly possessions by recognising that his relation thereto is temporary, lasting not beyond this life's sojourn.

He who conscious of his fleeting relation with the body, the other embodied selves, and the Universe of sense-objects, preserves absolute calm, a balanced mind, and is freed from sin—the product of self-blind



activity in the universe of phenomena—attains peace.

The teaching in this shloka has direct reference to the trouble in Arjun's mind on account of conflicting desires; he is plainly told that the way to attain peace is not to move to action from the motives operating in his mind, but out of regard for duty, abandoning all desire of personal gain.

The same conclusion as was reached after an exposition of the nature of the self in Ch. II, Sh. 38, is now arrived at after a discussion of the mode of controlling personal activity by cultivation of a self-abiding reason. Starting from either point, self within, or the body without, as man strives on to the goal of liberation, he in the end by the mutual co-operation of both attains the same state of peace and poise of being.

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।

स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥७२॥

*This Brahmi-state having attained he is no  
longer deluded.*

*Resting therein at the last moment he attaineth  
divine communion. 72*

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता० सांख्ययोगो नाम द्वितीयोऽध्यायः

*End of Chapter II—Sung by the Lord Designated*

YOGA OF EQUANIMITY

## CHAPTER III

### Yoga of Action

#### अध्याय ३

अर्जुन उवाच

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।  
तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥१॥  
व्यामिश्रेणैव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।  
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥२॥

Arjun said—

*If superior to action is held by thee Reason,  
O Janardan,  
Then why into this cruel action ye prompt me,  
O Keshav. 1*  
*By this involved speech ye confuse  
my understanding,  
Decisively declare the one by which I shall attain  
well-being. 2*

This question of Arjun is with reference to the teaching imparted in Ch. II, Sh. 49 and its discussion in the shlokas following. Krishna there did not talk of the superiority of Buddhi Yoga to action as such as a state of being in man. Arjun should not have understood him to mean that existence endued with a stable

reason without action at all was superior to action. He praised action guided by reason abiding in a Self instructed in Sankhya doctrine as superior to self-regarding action guided by reason which is a slave of the senses. He treated such activity as the product of self-blindness and therefore highly inferior. He then pointed out that a man possessed of such reason gives up the idea of agency in both "good and evil deeds" and asked him to strive to attain such reason by Yoga, (II-50). In the following three Shlokas 51, 52 and 53, praising such reason as leading to the highest goal he impressed upon him that the way to acquire such reason was to get rid of self-delusion and refuse to be moved to action relying on the letter of Scriptural rules or Vedic ritual prescribed for gaining worldly ends. Then in answer to Arjun's question, after stating that the principal characteristic of a man of self-abiding reason was complete sense control and freedom from attachment and aversion to sense objects likened him to an ocean, because he remains calm and unmoved amidst the play of desires like the ocean which is undisturbed as the waters keep pouring into it, in contrast with a desire-ridden man, who is ever peaceless.

Then in Ch. II, 71 and 72 he concluded by praising "God-abiding" state "Brahmi Stithi" as the supreme good, attainable by one who has cast off all desires and moves without yearning, or *I* and *my* feeling.

Arjun understood this teaching to mean that attainment of a calm, poised reason without any attachment to worldly enjoyments or aversion to unpleasant persons or objects, leading to a life of peace and contentment was superior to engaging in action, i.e., to a

life of stormy activity. But this appeared to him to be in sharp contrast with Krishna's desire to make him fight, as Arjun could conceive of nothing more calculated to hinder the attainment of such reason or destroy it if attained, than engaging in battle. To him fight-mentality appeared to be the very antithesis of self-abiding reason mentality praised so highly by Krishna. *He failed to grasp that such reason was treated essential because of its utility for performance of non-fruit regarding action, which is the highest form of activity for a human being.* By "Action" in Ch. II, Sh. 49, he probably understood all "action whatever" and not only "fruit-regarding action" though the sense there is obvious.

The whole trouble arose because Krishna in Ch. II, Shs. 49-53 did not explicitly state that Arjun should cultivate a self-abiding reason (*stable understanding*) and let it control and direct the activity of the organs of action by making it non-fruit-regarding and that a man of stable understanding acts like all other men, but his motives of action are regard for the interests of all and service of the Supreme. So Arjun who was in a disturbed frame of mind understood Krishna to be contrasting action as body-activity to gain some object against stable reason, giving rise to a state of contented inactivity. His idea was that if following the teaching he acquired such reason, he would then be without attachment to his cherished desires enumerated already, which would knock out the very foundation from beneath the contemplated fight. He became confused and requested Krishna to clear it up.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयाऽनघ ।

ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥३॥

**The Lord said—**

*In this world, the state (of equanimity)*

*by two methods*

*I have indicated before, O sinless,*

*By the Yoga of Knowledge of the Sankhyas*

*And the Yoga of Action of the Yogis.*

3

The reference here is to the state of equanimity described in Ch. II—38 after discussion of Sankhya Yoga (Shs. 11 to 37) and in Ch. II—71 after discussion of Buddhi Yoga (Shs. 39 to 70).

In the former immortality of the Self and transitory nature of the body were emphasised. It was pointed out that the capacity of sense-objects to bring about change was confined to the body—this casement of food, liable to be changed like unto a suit of clothes. Arjun was directed, resting in this knowledge, to adopt an attitude of stable poise (equanimity of being) amidst body-affections produced by sense-objects:

“Whom these worry not, the man, best of men

Equanimous midst grief and joy

Is meant for life everlasting.” (Ch. II, Sh. 15).

In this discussion automatic working of the body in obedience to the illumined Self was assumed. But mind machinery in the body has its own mode of operation and reacts to sense-objects according to dispositions already formed. What is called human action, is a product of several factors co-operating with

the Self. As these factors—organs of action (*Karma Indriyas*), senses (*Gyan Indriyas*), mind and reason (*understanding*) all separate from the Self are essential and perform their respective functions so long as the Self is encased in the body, they have to be brought under control.

The way to control them is to bring reason as driver of the machinery of the body engine under guidance of the Self. Reason alone acting under the orders of a properly instructed Self can bring about the attitude of equanimity amidst grief and joy, commended above.

Therefore in the latter section of Chapter II the nature and function of poised reason (stable understanding) and cultivation thereof through sense control by a self conscious of his eternity was pointed out. Arjun was directed to attain equanimity of being by performance of action without attachment under the guidance of poised reason.

Buddhi Yoga established the contact of a Self instructed in Sankhya theory, with his body and the world without on a new basis. It pointed out definite means for realising this attitude of equanimity in action by the doctrine of performance of action without attachment: Fixed in Yoga perform action without attachment, O Wealth-victor. In success and failure even, this equanimity is termed Yoga (Sh. 48). This doctrine was to be practised by cultivation of poised reason through sense control.

**So Gita Sankhya stands for a Self instructed in his eternity and transiency of the body-chariot,**

realising the necessity of maintaining poise amidst body affections and changing phenomena of nature.

**Buddhi Yoga stands for** a Self illumined as above equipped with poised reason (stable understanding) ready for action in an attitude of detachment.

**Karma Yoga stands for** a Self so illumined and so equipped actually engaged in performance of action without attachment.

Karma Yoga is performance of action with Sankhya understanding. It is Sankhya in action. So the Lord says that the same state of poise or equanimity was considered by him in theory by the Yoga of Knowledge of the Sankhyas and in practice by the Yoga of Action of the Yogis.

न कर्मणामनास्म्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।

न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥ ४ ॥

*Not by (resolving on) non-commencement  
of actions*

*Does man attain non-actionness.*

*Nor by mere renunciation does he attain  
perfection. 4*

**Non-commencement of action**—Mentally giving up mental planning and translation of a plan formed in the mind into action through sense activity.

**Non-actionness**—Attitude in which the Self treats the body as operated by the Suprême and himself gives up all idea of agency in action in thought, word and deed.

**Renunciation**—Mentally resolving not to employ

the organs of action (*Karma Indriyas*) in pursuit of objects of desire.

*Perfection*—Independence of body-affections and objects of desire; oceanic calm amidst the play of desires.

Taking up the Sankhya position—that the Self alone is eternal and the rest transient and changing and that we should not act in the interest of the transient body—if we decide to renounce mental dwelling on sense objects as desirable things, such mental resolve will not lead to non-actionness. The Self in his free state may not have needs, but as dweller within has. He must keep his dwelling (body) in a state of efficiency, by striving for food, clothing and shelter. It requires looking after. Not all the mental resolutions in the world banded together could ignore the urgent and constant calls of the body which force attention of the self in spite of himself. The body, a compound made up of the five elements, is subject to change, and requires constant adjustment to outside environment. All this means action. So, in spite of resolution, the non-commencer of action has to commence action. And if he does so, he becomes a subject of the play of rights and obligations. Does he not need co-operation of the world for fruition of his action always purposive as it is? Nay, his action becomes self-regarding, for, having renounced action as such, he only acts under compulsion to satisfy elementary needs. Such action puts him under obligation to those who are acting with a desire for fruit and who moved by that desire fulfil his needs. He really puts himself in bondage and achieves a result the opposite of what he renounced action for, namely, non-actionness leading to liberation.



Being embodied, we are ever active, never free for a single instant. As a portion of nature (matter and energy) focussed about the Self, the body is in direct and immediate contact with its parent, nature, participating in the activity of the whole. The will of the Self is superimposed on it as an organism and gives definite direction to its activity, but it cannot stop the action of forces of nature upon it, i.e., the constant interchange of the components, the egress and ingress of breath, the processes of appropriation and assimilation of food, water, etc., necessary for body maintenance and of evacuation for the same purpose. It is these which at bottom are the basis of all human activity and they hold good of every individual including a "mental renouncer" despite his resolve. The Self must exercise his organs of action to adjust himself to his environment.

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ ५ ॥

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसास्मरन् ।

इन्द्रियार्थान्निमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥ ६ ॥

*Not for an instant ever can any one rest*  
*inactive*

*Helplessly are all driven to action*  
*By the qualities born of nature.*

5

*Action-organs restraining who dwells in the*  
*mind*

*On sense-objects, the self-deluded person,*  
*hypocrite he is called.*

6

**[Non-attachment in mind action and sense action is true Karma Yoga. It is the key to non-actionness and perfection.]**

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।

कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥७॥

*Who the senses by the mind regulating  
Performeth, O Arjun,  
By action-organs, Yoga of action, unattached,  
he excels. 7*

### **Nature of Action without Attachment**

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।

शरीरयात्राऽपि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः ॥८॥

*Perform thou duteous action. Action is  
superior to inaction.  
Even the body sojourn will fail if thou  
remain inactive. 8*

It is a misreading of Sankhya Yoga and Buddhi Yoga to suppose that all action leads to bondage or that Karma Yoga is something distinct from Buddhi Yoga and keeps man in bondage because it deals with performance of action.

As explained before Karma Yoga is performance of action with Sankhya understanding. Poised understanding joins internal illumination with sense-action and this union results in Karma Yoga. Act man must. He must use his mind machine and operate his organs of action. This is inevitable. Therefore true illumination demands action in which there is no thought

of satiation of personal needs as such. The spring of action must be sought for elsewhere. It should be searched by man in the why of his existence as an embodied self: When the spring of action is drawn from this source action becomes a discharge of obligation to the Supreme who is responsible for his existence as an active organ of His ever moving Universe. It is duteous action in fact. So true Karma Yoga is performance of duteous action.

### Nature of Duteous Action

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।

तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसंगः समाचर ॥६॥

*Action performed as Yajna (offering) apart,  
This world moves in the bondage of action  
With that object, O Kunti-born,  
Unattached perform action.*

9

According to the generally accepted view, *Yajna* here stands for sacrifice to God as prescribed in the Vedas. In this view the rendering of the shloka is that barring action which is performed as sacrifice to God, i.e., Vedic sacrifice, other action leads to bondage. Such action alone liberates. In short, *Vedic sacrifice does not lead to bondage, all other action does.* This interpretation however runs in the very teeth of Krishna's attitude towards Vedic ritual as indicated in Ch. II, Sh. 42—45, specially 43, where he has assigned to it a position inferior to non-fruit regarding activity. Nay, he lays down emphatically that unless Arjun rose above the tangle of Vedic ritualism he could not acquire a self-

abiding reason, a reason which was the *sine qua non* of action without attachment.

It is no answer to maintain that Vedic sacrifice too is to be performed without attachment. For if non-attachment is the test, why differentiate Vedic sacrifice from other action? Further the direction, "unattached thou perform action" (मुक्त संन्यासः समाचर) can apply only to action which leads to bondage. If it applies generally, then differentiation of "action performed as sacrifice" (यज्ञार्थं कर्म) from other action loses all meaning. So sacrifice (यज्ञ) cannot have its current meaning here. What Krishna wants to emphasise here is the beauty of acting righteously for its own sake, at this moment a fight with the Kurus for the sake of right. Any mention of offerings of butter and *til* in the sacred fire as commendable action leading to liberation could hardly be germane to the point under discussion, and to the supreme necessity for Krishna to get Arjun to fight without loss of time. All his energy was directed to make fight appear commendable in his eyes and not the due observance of Vedic ritual for the sake of Vishnu. Nothing could have proved a greater hindrance to Krishna in realising his aim than extolling another form of activity as the best. It would have been surprising if such a penetrating intellect, placed in such circumstances, and determined to get round Arjun, had advocated any action as better than "engaging in battle." So far Arjun's aversion to fight had been able to withstand all his arguments. How then could he when discussing the propriety of engaging in slaughter of kinsmen and preceptors with the single object of winning him over to his view have commended

“oblation in fire” or performance of Vedic ritual as liberating action? What has Vedic ritual got to do with duteous action in the field of battle is not quite easy to comprehend. If it has then it is most extraordinary that Arjun did not accept such opportune advice and escaping from the field collect a number of good old priests and rend the sky with Vedic chants. His sacrifice would have been without attachment too at that time, for in that state of mind recovered fresh from his terrible plight he would have hardly thought of praying for gifts. He would have treated it more as a thanksgiving for his escape from the awkward tangle. This is absurd as the sequel would show. Therefore here by *Yajna* we are to understand *activity in which the inner spirit of the sacrifice, namely, offering as service or dedication, to the Supreme is emphasised*. Such action is not self-regarding, and therefore liberating. For such action there need be no direction for non-attachment. A connected reading of the whole section from Sh. 9 to 16 suggests this as the only meaning relevant to the subject of discussion.

### Speech of the Creator

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।

अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकर्मधुक् ॥ १० ॥

देवाभाक्यतानेन ते देवा भाक्यन्तु वः ।

परस्परं भाक्यन्तः श्रेयः ॥ परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ ११ ॥

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाकिताः ।

तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः ॥ १२ ॥



**Answer—**(2) *Yajna*—Sentient creation is directed to look for satiation of its needs to *Yajna* (dedication) by serving the Devas. The seal, the whale, and her humbler sisters in the sea, the feathered wanderers of the air, the citizens of the forest, the all pervading bacilli, the down trodden Shudra and others who don't swear by the monosyllabic *Aum* have been denied the privilege of performing Vedic Sacrifice, yet the Creator in his speech enjoins all to perform *Yajna*. Therefore *Yajna* must stand here for some kind of offering which the lowliest of the living could make alongside the tallest of caste Hindus.

The whole activity of non-rational creatures is directed to preservation and protection of their bodies and propagation of their kind. No movement of theirs is wasteful or aimless. It is all instinctive. Therefore such a creature in going through its prescribed course of action according to its innate disposition must be looked upon as making an offering. Man is rational and self-conscious. His action therefore is far freer.

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were allowed to perform such Sacrifice. This also made it necessary for him to interpret the word "Devas" as meaning Vedic gods who enjoy Vedic Sacrifices. Thus rendered these shlokas appear to be but a description of Sacrifice as enjoined in the Vedas, a topic wholly out of context with the point under discussion and wholly destructive of Krishna's design to prevail upon Arjun to fight the Kurus at once. It seems to have no bearing upon Krishna's anxiety to make fight appear as *duteous action* to Arjun, and introduces a contradiction in Krishna's view of Vedic ritual and its total rejection in Ch. II, 42-46 on the ground that it was an hindrance to the acquisition of self-abiding reason and his commendation of it here, though he is still impressing upon Arjun the beauty of acting without desire for fruit for which such reason is a prime necessity.

In addition to the elementary instincts of self-preservation, protection and propagation, other motives move him to action. *Yajna* should have a meaning here which along with man's rational activity would include the instinctive activity of sentient life, if sentient creatures also are to perform sacrifice as enjoined in the speech. *It means offering or dedication of his or its activity by each individual as his or its contribution to the total universal activity which by production of suitable objects brings about satisfaction of the respective needs of all.*

**Answer—(3) Devas—**In the speech all beings are instructed to serve the Devas to obtain "coveted enjoyments." None except the twice-born Hindus can serve the Devas by Vedic Sacrifice. Therefore service of the Devas to include all must here consist in some activity which is common to all sentient life. The activity of all creatures except man is instinctive, due to innate tendency; so this activity alone must be a form of offering to the Devas, as the non-rational creatures are capable of none other. And by engaging in this very activity, these creatures get all they need for their preservation, protection, and propagation. This is the return promised to them in the speech for their service to the Devas. The needs of these creatures or the gifts of the Devas to them are food and shelter. This however they obtain from the great storehouse of nature by the operation of natural forces on land and sea. Energy, in manifold forms—fire, heat, light, sound, electricity, magnetism—the sun, moon, air, water, the earth with its minerals, soils and vegetation, all are ever active producing objects for the use of the living. Man also barring



stray cases here and there of the twice-born, has managed to live and multiply without offerings and oblations by drawing upon the same source through properly directed activity of the body-organs.

Devas\* in this context therefore stands for all elements and objects whose acts are not self-determined, *who are without a will of their own, but conform to an eternal law doing their task like the parts of a machine as contrasted with sentient beings who are self-determined and whose actions are voluntary, i.e., who react*

\*The Earth, Fire, Space between Heaven and Earth, Air, the starry Heaven, the Sun, the Quarters, Moon, Stars and Planets, Ether (Akash), Darkness and Light, within these Devas abides the Imperishable Supreme.—(Brihad Up., Adh. 3, Brahman 7).

Then asked him Vidagdha, the son of Shakalya:

Q. How many *Devas* are there? O Yajnavalkya.

A. Yajnavalkya said:

(a) three, three hundred three, and three thousand three, or (b) thirty-three, or (c) six, or (d) three, or (e) two, or (f) one and one-half, or (g) one.

The three, three hundred three, and three thousand three, are their partial glories, there are in reality three and thirty *devas* as follows:—

1. *Eight Vasus*:—The five Elements, viz., Fire, Earth, Air, Water, Ether and (6) Sun, (7) the Heavens, (8) Moon and Stars. They are called Vasus because they comprehend the entire Universe.

2. *Eleven Rudras*:—The ten kinds of vital air (Prana) in man and the mind. They are all called Rudra because they cause grief to all as they depart from the body.

3. *Twelve Adityas*:—The twelve months of the year, so called because they take everything with them as they pass along.

4. *Indra*:—Thunder or Electricity.

5. *Prajapati*:—Sacrifice.

*to external influence not mechanically but according to their personal feeling guided by certain contemplated ends. In other words Devas here are elements and their principal manifestations which have acquired distinct names on account of their functions and use to man and other sentient creatures. They are not a composite of Prakriti (Nature) and Purush (Self) like sentient creatures, but just manifested forms of Prakriti (Nature), governed by laws imposed upon them by the Supreme and not self-directed.*

(c) The six *devas* are: Fire and Earth, Air and the Region between Heaven and Earth, Sun and the Heavenly region, between them these comprehend the entire Universe.

(d) The three *devas* are: The Earth, the Middle, and Heaven, for within them are all other *devas* comprehended.

(e) The two *devas* are: Foodstuffs (Anna), Vital Air (Prana).

(f) The one and one-half *devas* are: Air (Vayu) which moves. It is more than one because everything germinates and grows in it.

(g) The One *deva* is: Prana (Hiranyagarbha). This is called Brahman.—(Br. Up., Adh. 3, Brahman, 9.)

The whole Vedic conception of Devas is that of one Universal Power ever active in the world of phenomena receiving appropriate names because of its multiple functions. All Vedic gods are but functional names of one Supreme Creative power manifesting in myriad forms.

यो देवानां नामधा एक एव तं सम्प्रदत्तं भुवना यन्त्यन्या ॥ (ऋग् १०।८२।३.)

It is He who bears the names of all the Devas, the One whom all the worlds (regions) seek to know and desire to attain.—(Rig Veda., 10, 82-3.)

इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमादुरथा दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् एकं सद्विप्रा बहुध वदन्त्यमिं यमं मातरिश्वानमादुः ॥ (ऋग् १।१६४।२२.)

### *Sb. 11. Mutual Service of men and Devas*

. All forces and masses of matter (Sun, etc.) visible in nature are a manifestation of His might and majesty acting bound by His unalterable decrees. The activity of these non-sentient objects is not governed or affected by the activity of sentient beings. *They follow their even course regardless of what living creatures do. This is how they serve Creation.* Yet living creatures cannot exist without the co-operation of these, because they

The one Being is called in ways manifold by the wise, Indra (electricity), Mitra, Varuna (air), Agni (fire). He is the celestial Supreme Garutmana and the same Agni is called Yam (Death) and Matarishwa (all-pervading wind).—(Rig. Ved. 1. 164-22).

तदेवाग्निस्तदादित्यस्तद्वायुस्तदु चन्द्रमाः । तदेव शुक्रं तद्ब्रह्म ता आपः स प्रजापतिः ॥ ( यजु० ३२ । १ )

He is Fire (Agni), He is the Sun, He is the Air, and He is the Moon. He is Shukra, He is Brahman, He is Water, He is the Creator. (Yaju. Ved. 32-1).

स वरुणः सायमग्निर्भवति समित्रो भवति प्रातरुद्यन् । स सविता भूत्वाऽन्तरिक्षेण याति स इन्द्रो भूत्वा तपति मध्यतो दिवम् ॥ ( अथर्व० १३ । ३ । १३ )

In the evening He is Varuna (air) and Agni (fire). In the morning at dawn He is Mitra, He as Savita moves in ether, and becoming Indra warms Heaven from the Middle.

स धाता स विधाता स वायुर्नभ उच्छ्रितम् ॥ ३ ॥ सौर्यमा स वरुणः स रुद्रः स महादेवः ॥ ४ ॥ स अग्निः सउ सूर्यः सउ एव महायमः ॥ ५ ॥ ( अथर्व० १३ । ४ )

He is Sustainer, He is Designer, He is Air, and He is the lofty Rains—(a) He is Aryama, He is Varuna, He is Rudra, He is Mahadeo; (b) He is Fire, He is the Sun, He is Yam, the Supreme.—(Ath. Ved., 13, 4-5).

satisfy all their wants from non-sentient material objects, in various forms which are products of the interaction of all natural forces and masses of matter like heat, light, electricity, the Sun, Moon, Stars, Air, Water, Earth, etc. For food and shelter they depend upon their co-operation. When the course of their activity is fixed the only way to secure their co-operation is to study the laws governing them and shape human conduct accordingly, so that man may gain what he wants by so adjusting his action that instead of bringing about conflict with their activity it may manipulate it so that the desired fruit may be obtained. This is just how normal man ignorant of the secrets of Vedic Sacrifice has managed to live from the beginning of creation. Only to the extent that by studying nature phenomena he has worked them into forms useful to him, has man including the caste Hindu managed to satiate his needs.\* Scientific observation has

### *Illustrations*

\* (1) It is the nature of water to let heavy objects sink. But light objects float. By a careful study of this property of water, man was able to construct a boat in days of yore and steamships of enormous size today which have proved to be of the utmost value and use to him.

(2) It is the nature of sound to travel in space. A study of this property led man to talk to others at a distance or call them without physical approach before and has now led to the invention of the telephone, which is rendering great service to man.

(3) It is the nature of fire to turn liquids into gases, which have a tendency to diffuse and exert enormous pressure if confined in a closed vessel. A study of this property of fire and the pressure-exerting property of water when changed into steam has led to the construction of the steam-engine, which has harnessed these properties for the service of man.

been the key to the solution of problems of food, clothing, shelter and disease.

Whatever progress in arts or sciences was made in the past or has been made in the present is the result of man offering his services to the elements (Devas), i.e., studying the laws of their operation and moulding his action according to them, in return whereof the Devas have offered their services by allowing him to use them. This mutual service has brought about conferment on him the boon of enjoying manifold objects, and satisfying his wants in myriad ways. These Devas are ever active in the interest of all sentient beings. They themselves have no wants of their own. They have been set in motion by the Supreme ever abiding within them, Who has conferred the gift of bodies on souls, and Who has made Himself responsible for their upkeep. In pursuance of this self-imposed undertaking He sustains this manifest universe. So if the activity of sentient life does not interfere with the operation of natural forces in matter according to law, then sentient life must ever remain happy and well supplied. Whenever there is conflict the result is pain, for the Devas do their duty without attachment being but blind forces in operation bound by unalterable law. Sentient beings can disregard this fundamental limitation upon their activity at grave peril to themselves.

### **Mutual Service of Men *Inter se***

All beings are maintained by co-operation of the totality of forces operating in the Universe. Serving these forces necessitates keeping harmonious relations

amongst beings *inter se*, else there would be conflict between the activities of beings and those of nature and its forces. Beings would not get what they desire from the sole source of man's possessions—nature. There is a great chance of disharmony in a society of beings who are rational, for the value of their activity depends upon the co-operation of soul and body. And body differs according to training received, namely, training of the senses, mind, reason, and the organs of action. For this training man is indebted to man. All the accumulated experience of the race in the field of religion, science and art is at his disposal. All institutions developed in the course of ages, means of communication, and production, methods of raising food and supplying other necessities of life, all his so called earthly possessions are products of the co-operation of man with man. He inherits these as a member of human society. But this imposes upon him an obligation to return this service, for society is but he in the aggregate. And the obligation keeps him indebted to society until it is discharged. Man is always active and is producing results or helping in the production of results, but the value of his activity in comparison to what he gets is not always high, the balance is generally against him. He can seek and find liberation only by offering his activity in the service of all, as a poor return. This mutual service between the Devas and men and men *inter se*, would result in the production of maximum comforts for all and thus lead to the realisation of the aim of the Creator, "By this (principle of service) shall ye propagate. Be this to you the giver of plenty."

### ***Sh. 12. Return of Gifts to Devas***

**Objection**—Objects are brought into existence for consumption and use of all sentient life. Except man, none is able to give back the gift in the form of oblations in the sacred fire. *Does giving back here then mean offering the obtained gifts in fire and reducing them to their original constituents?*

**Answer**—The original plan never was to make them for ultimate destruction in the sacrificial fire, but for satisfaction of the needs of creatures. The teaching therefore cannot be for consigning the whole to the sacred fire, but to set it free for the use of others. The object of Devas is to serve creation, they do not act for their own sake but for the benefit of created beings. So the injunction must be to share the “coveted enjoyments” with others. The reason is that the activity of others is a fundamental contributory cause of man’s possessions as an individual. No man can ever get anything in the shape of a consumable commodity without the active co-operation of the entire universe of beings in one form or another.

One has simply to sit down for a short while in a mood of reflection and he will be amazed to find that what he calls fruit of his activity is so by abstraction only. In a place without another man or creature nearby he could not satisfy a single want even if he worked till eternity. He would exist just like a howling beast in a trackless forest. *It is because of the co-operation of fellow beings that man comes into a tremendous heritage of language, literature, religion, science, art, social institutions and environment to train his body for*

*definite activity. He is simply a specialist of one tiny element of activity out of the total which goes to fashion objects for his consumption and use. And if all labour for production, all undoubtedly are entitled to share in consumption.*

Every individual's activity is directed to satisfy his needs and if in the hands of some there is a surplus, it is a trust in their hands for the Devas, in other words for other beings. Devas do not eat, beings do. If a man enjoys the bestowed gifts alone he is a *thief* as he is guilty of misappropriation. He keeps back what belongs to all, believing it to be his own, though in fact he is entitled only to a share in it. A portion out of the proper share of others has collected into his hands by natural causes turning him into a trustee thereof. This wrong attitude of his interferes with the world order, and is sinful, as it is a cause of pain and suffering to them. *Giving in the case of Devas means offering to creatures the "coveted enjoyments" for which they alone have use.*

The whole Universe is a huge sacrificial pit in which perennial sacrifice is going on. Man's activity results in putting him into possession of certain consumable things. He finds that he has got a much larger quantity than he needs. Offering that to others who need will be sacrifice again and so the purpose of the *Devas* will be truly served.

### ***Measure of Man's Needs***

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।

मुंजते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥ १३ ॥



*Dedicated leavings they eat, the saints  
Are saved from every sin  
Wrong-doers they, who only cook for self  
They verily eat but sin.*

• 13

Those who keep the gifts as a trust ordained by God and utilise it to relieve the sufferings and wants of the deserving, appropriating just a bare fraction necessary to keep themselves fit for service or discharge of duty are saintly men. This attitude saves one from sin. But if there is sense of ownership in the whole, though much in excess of one's needs then using all that is tantamount to eating sin, for he is partaking of more than his proper share. Joint interest of all who need should be the ruling principle of the righteous in all their possessions in excess of their proper needs. In everything that he uses, man should have an attitude of readiness to share with those who are in need.

According to the orthodox view the sense of shlokas 10—12 is that the Creator after creating the Universe of beings called his special favourites, the Hindu males of the three principal castes—women, Shudras and non-Hindus are forbidden to perform Vedic sacrifice—and directed them to propagate by means of Sacrifice enjoined in the Karma Kanda (section) of Veda and look to it for satiation of their wants, and to propitiate Indra and other Vedic gods with sacrifices in return for which they will bestow the desired boons on them. The boons so conferred are not to be utilised by anybody without sacrificing a portion thereof again to the donor deities otherwise he would be called a thief.

In keeping with the spirit of the above interpretation this shloka too has been interpreted as meaning, that he who sits to his meals after performing the five daily sacrifices is a saint, a good man and is saved from all sins committed in connection with the five places enumerated in the Vedas. But he who appropriates all that is cooked for his own use is a sinner, a veritable eater of sin.

Swami Shri Shankaracharya comments as below:

Those who after performing sacrifices to gods, etc., eat the remains of the food—which is called amrita, ambrosia—are freed from all sins committed at the five places of animal slaughter (such as the fire place) as well as from those sins which result from involuntary acts of injury and other causes. But as to the others who are selfish and cook food for their own sake, what they eat is sin itself while they themselves are sinners.—Tr. p. 100, Mahadeva Shastri.)

The five daily *Yajnas* (sacrifices) are:—

1. *Deva Yajna*: Offering sacrifice to gods.
2. *Brahma-Yajna*: Teaching and reciting scriptures.
3. *Pitri Yajna*: Offering libations of water to ancestors.
4. *Nri Yajna*: The feeding of the hungry.
5. *Bhuta Yajna*: The feeding of lower animals.

These are the five daily duties enjoined on householders. The performance of these duties frees them from the five fold sin, inevitable to a householder's life due to the killing of life, from the use of, (1) the pestle

and mortar, (2) the grinding stone, (3) the oven, (4) the water-jar, and (5) the broom.—(Gita, p. 78, Swami Sarupanand.)

• The only excuse for interpreting *Yajna* in terms of the five sacrifices is the use of the word *pachanti*—they cook. But it is not quite easy to see how this word can include Brahma Yajna and Pitri Yajna for no cooking is required in performance of these. Secondly it necessitates *sarvakilivashai*—all sins, to be restricted to sins committed at the five places as Shri Shankaracharya so fairly puts it. But there is absolutely no warrant whatever for this restriction. In a work so exact and terse as the Gita one would have expected *Panchkili-vashai*—five sins and not the use of a term so general as to include all sins.

Krishna is in the midst of the discussion of *Niyat Karma*—duteous action, and he is anxious to demonstrate to Arjun that it is action without attachment. Now action without attachment can proceed only from poised reason and Krishna warned Arjun to guard against the bewildering maze of Vedic ritual if he wanted to acquire poised reason, in shlokas 42 to 53 of Chapter II. He rejects performance of Vedic sacrifice as a mode of attainment of poised reason. And for a man who has attained poised reason he treats Vedic ritual as of little consequence (*vide* Ch. II, Sh. 46).

The arguments which he advanced for rejecting it apply with special force to the performance of these five daily sacrifices, as these are enjoined on the caste-Hindu males to expiate for the sins involved in the accidental killing of the ant, the insect and other little ones

in the collection and fashioning of materials for food. The sin involved in this killing is treated so heinous that the non-performer of the sacrifices is treated as a veritable eater of sin, a thing bound to alarm Arjun and yet this occurs in the course of an argument which is directed to meet his objection as to the sin involved in killing of kin and preceptors for the sake of appropriating the revenues of a kingdom for their food, etc. On the one hand, there is a long harangue on the eternity of the soul, the transitory nature of the body and the world, acquisition of poised reason and equanimity of being leading to oceanic calm and a discourse on action without attachment and deprecation of Vedic ritual to gain worldly ends, in order to make wholesale slaughter leaving its trail of misery in widowed women and orphans, deserted villages, dislocated agriculture and industry and weakened national strength for succeeding generations to bear, appear as an act of supreme merit. Arjun is assured that if he engaged in it in the attitude advised he would be saved from all sin, that this attitude was sublime enough to lift him beyond the three quality nature into union with the Divine.

On the other hand in between this long discourse Arjun is quietly told what a terrible thing it was to sit at a meal without first expiating for the guilt of the accidental killing of the ant and the insect without which he would be an eater of sin.

When Arjun says that he is not willing to partake of food stained with the blood of preceptors and relations, he is given a lecture on the sublimeness of deliberate killing of the near and the dear. But while fighting in this mentality he is enjoined to be mindful

of the tiny ones creeping into the mortar and the water-jar. It was an advice so utterly bewildering that if Krishna had used and Arjun understood the shloka in the sense put upon it by orthodoxy he would have at once asked for further light.

Further the question is whether saving Arjun from the vicarious sin of slaughter in the mortar and the fire-place was so important that Krishna standing in the battle-field with the armies anxious to engage in a deadly encounter, charged with the stupendous task of steeling Arjun into a mood of battle by filling him with hope and engage him in wholesale slaughter by removing his misgivings, found it necessary to impress upon him the awful nature of the sin involved in the accidental slaughter of the little ant and always expiate for it in normal life after the battle was over.

Then again this interpretation creates insuperable difficulties in the interpretation of Yajna as Vedic sacrifice in Shs. 15 and 16 following. For there again, these special favourites of the Creator—the caste Hindu males would become controllers of the natural phenomenon of the fall of rain. How can there be rain unless the favourites be pleased to perform a sacrifice, an idea too amusing to need more comment than that if the Supreme had committed this supreme folly, this world would have come to an end long ago, as nothing is more common than rainfall in non-Hindu lands and nothing so rare as a Vedic sacrifice for rain even in the land, which entangled in the ethics of the millstone and the oven, the favourite has *renounced* in trust to the worldly-minded follower of the *Carpenter (by caste) of Nazareth* and

the *net* proceeds whereof he *resignedly* shares with his *ex-Hindu* neighbour, as a *forbearing* partner.

Another difficulty is that in Sloka 17 following, a man who has acquired illumination has no obligatory action left binding on himself to do which renders this warning about sin in accidental killing of the little ones and expiation therefor by five daily obligatory sacrifices wholly nugatory and meaningless.

Then as is clear from shlokas 31 and 32 following, Krishna explicitly and categorically addresses his teaching to man and not to the twice-born Hindu males only. But if these five daily sacrifices form part of it, then he condemns women, Shudras and non-Hindus as non-followers of the teaching without cause. This condemnation becomes pre-ordained in their case. But Krishna in Shloka 32 of Chapter IX gives hope to the woman and the Shudra and promises them the Supreme Abode if they but devote to him. And what greater devotion can there be than following his teaching to perform obligatory action, which is action without attachment? Shloka 32 of Chapter IX clearly shows that Krishna in shlokas 31 and 32 of this chapter addresses his teaching to these classes also.

Broom in hand, this fantastic interpretation by hanging the millstone round this mighty teaching aimed at lifting man above the unlimited dimensions of this manifest universe into union with the Divine (Sh. 19) has succeeded only too well in contracting it down to the confines of the mortar and the water jar for the favourites' behoof.

The Lord is here considering the nature of duteous

action in concrete with reference to *aparigraha* (sense of non-dominion in worldly possession) as the royal road to liberation.

The basic foundation of the world-order is mutuality and co-operation. Man is not free to misappropriate his possessions to himself or refuse to work and remain an idler or act selfishly. He is part of the Cycle and must perform his assigned task like the other parts.

### The Wheel of The Universe

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसंभवः ।

यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥ १४ ॥

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।

तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ १५ ॥

*From food grow up beings  
from rain springs forth food  
From Yajna pours forth rain and Yajna is  
action-born. 14*

*Action know ye Brahman-created  
Brahman evolves from the Imperishable  
So the all-prevading Brahman in Yajna ever  
presides. 15*

[Yajna here clearly means offering of the individual activity of the components constituting the cosmos to the total activity.]

All beings and forces of nature acting according to law bring about a state of things which results in the fall of rain. The Creator in His beneficence has not left it to the caprice of man. Indifferent to whether a

Vedic sacrifice is performed to god Indra or not, He has poured down rain to sustain His creation and not excluded other than the twice-born Hindus from sharing His bounty. It is the total cosmic activity represented by the action of the sun upon water which is responsible for rain and hence there is neither invidious distinction nor remissness both human traits.

Action, has been defined in Gita, Ch. VIII, Sh. 3 as follows:—

“That which causes the genesis, and manifestation of sentient beings and non-sentient objects and also sustains them, the integrated (total) cosmic activity in the form of a sacrifice is called action.”

So for each component, it is his or its individual activity as offering into the total activity which brings about manifestation of objects for the use of the living.

Back of this perennial Cosmic Sacrifice is of course the Supreme Creator. He is Director of the total activity whole and part. He is the true Actor. The individuals are simply the media of this activity.

### *Why the Wheel Revolves*

The purpose of this Sacrifice is evident from this cycle. It is simply to keep the whole together in harmony for the benefit of beings who are components of this cycle. All is for them. They are the object of this beneficent activity of the Creator who has set the universe in motion. All individual products of whatever nature coming into existence in the progress of this cycle are for the use of all those who in reality need them for their highest good.



**Sh. 16-18. Man's Place in the wheel  
Sence-Reveller**

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।

अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥ १६ ॥

*On the wheel so set in motion who doth not  
mould his action*

*Of ill-guided life revelling in sense-delights,  
O Partha, he lives in vain. 16*

All component parts are bound together in relation. The whole is a network of relations. Harmony is possible only when there is no disturbance of relations by any component. Any disturbance anywhere would impede the smooth working of the whole. There can be no trouble on this score so far as non-sentient components are concerned for they perform their part with unerring exactitude bound by the unalterable decrees of Providence. But with rational man the case is different. He has freedom of action. All is meant for him, but by self-blindness he has succeeded in dis-inheriting himself, and looks upon himself as the abandoned of God. In place of co-operation he seeks refuge in individualism, and class antagonism.

Man on birth feeds his body and mind by the co-operation of the total forces of nature and the integrated service of the whole of society. He is born to a great inheritance. He finds the whole of the not-self (world beyond him) active, his individual activity also a part of the whole. The co-operation of the rest enables him to achieve his ends. Why, his own special activity is nominally his own, for in training his mind

and the organs of action for it he has had accumulated experience of the race in the shape of language, tradition, educational institutions, example of his fellow-beings and a favourable environment—products of the individual activities of all, co-operating together as his guide and teacher. So while enjoying himself and keeping his soul in the body he is really incurring a tremendous obligation to society. The only return it is possible for him to make is his own individual activity. For his assumed right of claiming the use of the mental and moral possessions of society, the co-operation of fellow-beings for provision of food, clothing and shelter, the means of communication, production, and distribution, and products of their industry, in other words the services of the entire Lok (Universe) he offers the services of his body-organs, themselves under prior obligation to society for training them up for the discharge of his obligations. Does it not behove man then to live for the good of his benefactors? His individual action means everything. If in harmony with the cycle, its effect is beneficent all round, but if blind, foolish, deluded and in slavery to sense, then a man of such action is born in vain and lives in vain, as he is harmful to society. He uses the body instrument neither for the good of the Lok (Universe) nor for that of his self. He is self-blind, he has forgotten himself and his place in the universal Wheel, he treats his individual activity as the cause of what he gets and ignores the contribution of the Cosmos, as of no value. Oblivious of the equal right of others not to be compelled to suffer from his harmful activities, he in slavery to his body machine gives himself up to sense-enjoyments without regard to

their effect upon others and on himself in the long run. He considers his claim to fool about as exercise of individual freedom, but he denies the claim of other human beings and creatures to equal freedom to follow their pursuits, no matter if they are disagreeable to him, as a curtailment of his freedom. He lives for himself and wants the rest to mould their action to suit his whims which are every moment changing. For him the body is all, his lord and master, this bread and water composition. Such a man forges chains of bondage round his self through body affections. Doesn't such a man live in vain?

### Self-Reveller

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।

आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ १७ ॥

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।

न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥ १८ ॥

*One rejoicing in the self, full to satiety in  
the self  
Content in the self alone, nought has binding  
on himself to do. 17  
Not in him is personal interest in acts of  
commission or omission  
Nor to any being looks he for help for  
personal gain whatever. 18*

Knowing himself to be an occupant of the body-vehicle, he realises that the Self has no wants and so he need not act for their satisfaction only. As regards his

body he knows it to be part of the world cycle which has been set up by a beneficent Providence. He ever works for the satisfaction of wants of all life and so his body is bound to be nourished and kept efficient provided its activity is harmonious with the total activity. So even for body maintenance he relies on the all-beneficent purpose of the Cycle, and performs no action for its sake alone. Not having attachment for worldly possessions which minister to the senses he does not act for their sake either, but makes his activity all regarding; it becomes all beneficent *suo motu* and not by injunction.

A self-illuminated man is not actuated by self-interest in what he does or does not do like an ordinary man. He really has no desire for personal gain. Anything a man wants to gain in the objective world can only be gained by the co-operation of all beings. So if a man does an act with a view to obtain particular fruit, he of necessity has to depend upon the co-operation of others. But if he has no such aim in view and his activity is not motivated by self-interest, then to him the consequence of the same is of no concern. The activity of others qua his personal gain does not affect him and he is independent of it. He does what he does as his offering into the Eternal Sacrifice, the aim of which is the benefit of all.

Taking the two extreme cases of a self-indulgent reveller and a self-controlled man rejoicing in his self alone, as being his sole possession in truth and in fact and bringing about a sharp contrast between the activity of the two, Krishna exhorts Arjun thus,

### Test of "Duteous Action"

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥ १९ ॥

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।

लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ २० ॥

*So unattached ever perform action as has  
to be performed  
By performing action unattached does man  
attain the Supreme. 19  
By action alone, attained perfection, Janak\*  
and others  
With an eye to world-harmony, also,  
you should perform action. 20*

Non-fruit regarding action now assumes a positive aspect. It becomes synonymous with action which keeps the Universe together in harmony or which is in harmony with the Creator's 'cycle'. Thus man's task

\*Janak once ordered an offending Brahman to leave his dominions and live elsewhere. The Brahman asked the king to declare to him the extent of his dominion, promising then to gladly retire to the dominion of another prince in obedience to his command. At this the king heaved frequent and warm sighs and said nothing in reply. While he was so sitting absorbed in thought he suddenly swooned. On recovery a while later he spoke:

Though this old kingdom of my ancestors is subject to me I could not find my exclusive and single domain anywhere on a search all over. Not even in Mithila (capital), Aye! in my own offspring even. Not finding it even there, I fell in a swoon, then wisdom dawned on me. And I think now, that either I have no domain or that all is my domain. Either this body-case even is not

is to carefully observe and study the fine adjustment of its parts and his own place therein, as a part and then so to behave as not to disturb its equilibrium and interfere with its working, but to bring the faulty components into line with the rest. So the Lord now lays down a double test to judge human action. *Duteous action is action performed without attachment in the interest of world-harmony (Loksangrah).*

On this basis however there come into existence mutual rights and duties between the individual and society. Increase of harmony, goodwill and creation of an atmosphere suitable for advancement of individual man towards his goal becomes the cardinal duty of society, the *raison d'être* of its existence.

mine or the whole earth is mine, and likewise that of others too. This is my conviction, oh best of the twice-born. Reside here as long as you please and enjoy.

The Brahman asked—

Abiding in what reason have you renounced the feeling of “mineness” in this kingdom of your ancestors which is under your rule? What has led you to consider this kingdom as not yours or all as yours?

Janak replied—

I find indigence and affluence here unenduring and transient and so I could lay my hand on nothing which I could call mine independent of place and time. Reflecting whose this was I recalled the Vedic text that “it was anybody’s property” and so I failed to find anything with my reason which I could call mine. Guided by this reason I have given up the notion of mineness.

Listen now by what reason I see my domain everywhere. I desire not for myself the smells within the nose. So the earth being conquered is subject to me. I have no desire for tastes within the mouth, the light appertaining to the eye, the feeling of touch in skin, or sound in ear, for me and so water, light, air and ether

The Self is an end unto himself. Embodied he comes into relation with other embodied selves. All external activities for individual man are good so far and so far only as they give him a consciousness of his own reality, and lead to self-realisation. Any departure therefrom is harmful to him and to the rest, for it at once introduces an element of ignorance, and leads to mal-adjustment in the Cycle. All activities of society should be such that they may lead to mental, moral and spiritual advancement of individuals and not satisfaction of physical needs only.

As social activities are sum total of the activities of individual men, it is obvious that unless men are jealous to have an ideal environment in which to grow which implies ideal conduct in themselves and in others, such a thing as absolute individual advancement is unthinkable. Thus every man whose activities ignore their effect upon the universe of sentient life as such except for his temporary gain is really his own enemy and that of his children. He suffers with the rest the consequences of his ill-advised activity by creating an unfavourable environment which is ever active and influences him throughout life. So for our own ad-

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are always subject to me being conquered. I do not desire for myself the mind within me and so it is under my bidding. All these actions of mine are verily, for this purpose, for the Devas and Pitras, for all beings (Bhutas), and those who seek at my door.

Then the Brahman smilingly said, that, he was Dharma in disguise, come to learn something about him. He was the one person to turn this wheel, the name of which is Brahman, the spoke of which is reason, which never turns back and which is kept to its course by the quality of goodness as its circumference.

(Anugita, Ch. 17.)

vancement it becomes necessary to make our action other-regarding in return for what the Lok (universe) does for us, otherwise we shall be in bondage to Sāṁsār (universe). Our activity is just one element in the complex of conditions which bring about fulfilment of our needs, and so we are liable to compensate the world for co-operation. The only thing we can do is to purify the inner motive which directs our activity and this will make the activity conducive to (*Loksangrah*) world harmony.

The reason why this purity of motive is enjoined is because of its effect upon fellow-beings.

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥२१॥

*Howsoever the virtuous behave, so doth the  
world follow*

*Whatever standard they set up men  
unquestioningly obey. 21*

This shloka gives expression to the profound psychological truth that man is an imitating animal. Man is a creature of his environment, which in turn takes its impress from those who are mentally and morally superior to the rest. These take their notions of right and wrong from those whom they regard as their mental and moral superiors, until so ascending we come to the man who gave the doctrine, which the followers swear by, and who set the standard of right and wrong by his own conduct. He is taken as an embodiment of the morality he taught and his outward behaviour with men and things is regarded as a model of conduct



for the followers. So each influences the others in an ascending series according to his mental and moral make up. The better the equipment, the greater and more lasting the influence.

Men of outstanding character of the generation become interpreters and their conduct a practical illustration of the conduct of the great one of their religion. Ordinary man puts implicit faith in their bonafides as his well-wishers. He accepts their interpretation of the why of his economic and moral ills and uses their recipes to remove them.

Therefore the springs of action of noted men of the generation are for it matters of fundamental importance. If their moral and spiritual equipment is deficient and inadequate and they are not able to put a restraint on their ambition for worldly advancement, then they harness social and economic ills of the body-politic in service of their designs to gain wealth, political power and social influence. They appear on the stage as selfless physicians with the curative solution in hand, which an unsophisticated public swallows trusting in their bonafides. But this solution hides the insidious poison, as it is a cure not so much of the ills of the mass, as of the obstacles to the fulfilment of the ambitions of the doctors themselves. These are sought to be removed by enlisting the sympathy and weight of the unwary and the fanatic. The schemes properly dressed are pushed under cover of ventilation of grievances of the community. In other words the voice of the community as a whole is utilised for individual or class advancement by antagonising it with the forces of opposition which bar the way to their progress. The community hypnotised by

carefully chosen slogans and catching formulæ as war cries, is made to fight their battles under self-delusion.

If their moral and spiritual equipment is powerful enough to withstand the constant goadings of the craving for name and gain, then these men get comparative internal peace themselves, and their influence is beneficial to the community as a whole. When departing such men leave lasting impression on the succeeding generations. The operation of this principle is seen best in the conduct of the Teachers who became founders of religions on the one hand, and perversion of their actions to worldly ends by the ambitious elite amongst their followers on the other.

### **Influence of the Conduct of the Great upon Men**

#### *Christ*

The Son of man lived, served and suffered for mankind, for the poor and the down-trodden. He was the principle of service incarnated in the human flesh. His noble example has always moved men and women to their inmost depths, for service for God's sake. Countless persons have dedicated their whole lives in the past and are doing so now, for the relief of suffering and for the mental and moral uplift of man.

It has given us a whole galaxy of saints who conquering the flesh devoted themselves to the service of humanity as servants of the Lord and left organisations behind them to carry on the noble task of relief of suffering and man's mental and moral growth. It has disposed the affluent to open wide their purse strings for the same purpose. Christians of both sexes have

carried the light into the farthest corners, braving danger and inconvenience, aye, risking their very lives. It has served to engender in them a most marvellous spirit of adventure. Christian emigrants resting in God as their refuge have occupied almost all parts of the globe long inhabited by the dwellers of the cave and the forest.

So powerful indeed has been the hold of this principle of service that even Cupidity has sought refuge under its fostering wings. Christian States hungry for land and greedy for wealth have justified their policy of land-grabbing and commercial exploitation on this principle of serving mankind. Their governments have evolved the amazing doctrine of a trust for the moral and material benefit of the unorganised coloured heathen or the weak Christian. This trust is imposed upon the unfortunate beneficiary through the tempting bait of the *loan* and the *expert adviser*, and kept alive by the unfailing weapons of *civil strife* and *divide et impera* (Subjects *v.* Ruler, Class *v.* Class, and Creed *v.* Creed), with judiciously timed whizzing tunes of the rifle and the machine-gun, not to talk of the latest additions to the Orchestra, namely, the aeroplane, the tank and the armoured car. Finding these tunes not elevating enough to keep the civilized brethren to the path of virtue and selfless service, *Political Piety* now proposes to conduct the orchestra amidst the other life-giving fumes of poison gas, the latest product of Western inventive genius in the line of holy incense for the instantaneous elevation of the self-willed beneficiary and the recalcitrant brother into the region beyond.

Curious as it may seem there are many pious Christians who sincerely and earnestly swear by this trust

theory, and support their governments when they intermeddle with the affairs of other less organised states. No doubt it has had most tremendous consequences for the exploiter and the exploited in all parts of the globe, affecting every sphere of life, moral, social, economic and political.

. *Buddha* (B. C. 560—480)

Compassion, renunciation and attainment by personal endeavour alone had incarnated themselves in this rare product of the Hindu race. He embodied in himself the doctrine of evanescence of the phenomenal world and attachment thereto as the cause of all human suffering, as well as release therefrom by unremitting personal effort. By untiring devotion up to the very last breath of his life to the service of truth he inculcated upon his disciples the supreme duty of living and preaching the doctrine without thought of danger and inconvenience. The result was that his personal example made a moving appeal to the people. They devoted themselves to the doctrine, carrying the light to the remotest corners as then known, braving all dangers.

This principle of renunciation has kept the greed and ambition of ruler and ruled in check in all Buddhist countries. We find no evolution of the doctrine of trust for exploitation of the unwary and the weak. Rather we find a consciousness of the duty of mutual service and feeling love and compassion for the people.

The latest instance is the great sacrifice of the Samurai of Japan who placed their valuable possessions and surrendered ancient privileges for the sake of their motherland in the seventies of the last century and laid

the foundation of the greatness of modern Japan.\*

It has given one of the greatest rulers of all times in the person of Asoka. His greatness lies not in his conquests, but in the example of service he set as man and ruler in the political, social, economic, moral and the religious sphere.

In a faith in which sense indulgence was deprecated and greed condemned, personal ambition failed to find an alluring outlet. It developed a state of resigned and joyous passivism with a high regard for the sanctity of life amongst its votaries, as the original missionary enthusiasm waned, and Bhikshus of the Order resigning their position of guide took to the easy life of the richly endowed monastery.

### *Zoroaster (Zara-Thusht)*

The knight Prophet of ancient Iran incarnated in himself the mighty never-ending duel between vice (*Angr-Miniush*) and virtue, (*Spenta-Miniush*) that goes on within the human heart on this mortal plane. All *Teachers* have recognised this fundamental trait of

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\*In 1854 Japan's policy of seclusion had been abruptly brought to an end and she had been forced to grant concessions to the Great Powers. It then became obvious to the Samurai who performed the work of administration in each clan on behalf of their feudal lords that if the independence of their country was to be maintained a complete change of government was necessary. By 1871 feudalism had been abolished and the Daimyo surrendered their fiefs. A few years later the Samurai gave up their hereditary pensions which had been their main source of income. . . . *Nothing illustrates more clearly the Japanese power of individual sacrifice and of corporate action in the service of an ideal than this common acceptance of new institutional forms.*—(Modern Japan, p. 62, C. F. Allan.)

human existence. But the uniqueness of righteous Zoroaster lies in making this eternal duel the basis of his ethics, metaphysics, and cosmogony and his conception of the revolving wheel of nature called universe. There came into recognition two worlds of beings with two Creators, the good and the evil side by side in perpetual conflict, with ultimate victory to Mazadah's righteous children leading a life of purity in thought, word and deed and final defeat to the evil creation of Ahreman.

This world in all its manifestations no longer remained for Iran (Persia) the abode of pain and woe, but became something essentially good. The six conferences with the Archangels Veh-Man, Ardi-Behesht, Sheher-e-Ver, Spandar-Mad, Khoordád and Amerdad, between the first and the final revelation by Ahur-Mazadah Himself, finally made Zoroaster bearer of the glorious message from Him that along with the sacred fire—the mighty emblem of purity to burn into nothing the dross incidentally collecting in their custody and enjoyment—the animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms, and land and water were all at the disposal of the devotee of the beneficent Supreme for his use. This fire was the emblem of the might, majesty and purity of Ahur Mazadah, the supreme blazing energy eternally active and busy unwearied in combating the designs and machinations of Ahreman, for His children's behoof.

Scripture abounds in instances of the duel of the two forces in the heart-arena of the saintly Iranian during the ten years preceding the final revelation and conversion of his cousin Maidhyai Máouha. During this period despondency because of the slow or no progress of his mission and buoyant hope in the assurance

of victory promised by his master, the Divine Ahur-Mazadah ruled his being from time to time. Then ultimately after completion of the message in the final revelation there came the final and last struggle with Ahreman, in which the all-powerful spell of *Abun-Var* (Yathá áhú Vairyo, i.e., the will of the Lord is the law of righteousness) enabled the spiritual warrior to hurl the evil genius into the darkest abyss and compel him to give the pure soul up as finally lost to him.

Consciousness of this perpetual war with a promise of victory in the end by the Supreme for a life of righteousness and purity of heart turned Zoroaster into an active and militant commander of the forces of Mazadah on this mortal plane. Guided by *Vehman* (spirit of wisdom) he met the national clergy of Iran, the Kigs and Karafs on their own ground and disputed the doctrine with them.

Throughout his forty-seven years' ministry, Zoroaster worked incessantly to usher in the reign of righteousness by attending and helping the sick and the needy, bringing solace to the distressed and the disappointed by the magic spell of "Yathá áhú Vairyo" and infusing hope and enthusiasm in the mass by assuring them final success in all their righteous efforts, on the one hand, and by dealing effective and mighty blows on the agents of Ahreman on the other. Chief among these agents was Are-jat-asp the ruler of Turan who staked his all to annihilate Zoroáster and his following and ended by wiping himself out in his final struggle with Isfendiar the son of Gooshtasp the first Zoroastrian ruler of Iran.

As Ahur-Mazadah's servant and messenger Zoroaster by assuring to man the whole of manifested nature as his rightful and legitimate heritage from his Supreme Father, gave that turn to the life of Iran which at once marked out that land from all others in those ancient days. For life's struggles on the world-stage besides yielding plenty to the *Mazadaiyan* here below, became milestones along the path to plenty in the beyond. The Law of personal exertion for the devotee leading a life of purity in thought, word and deed, whether as householder, state servant, or in any capacity whatever acquired a spiritual base and paved the way for joy everlasting hereafter. All ambition for material possessions and enjoyments became laudable and good, conditional on its being tempered in the fire of righteousness. Ahreman indeed was not to be allowed an asylum in the within of Mazadah's devotee. But so long as he was not allowed to exert his influence in Ahur-Mazadah's good creation, his devotee's path was clear.

Knowledge of science and arts was essential if the *Mazadaiyan* was to fill the role of custodian and enjoyer of the riches of Nature befittingly. For any remissness therein, resulting in misery and pain, Ahur Mazadah could not be held responsible for He in his beneficence had handed over the key of the storehouse of nature to man for him to guard and enjoy, minding always the "*Abun Var*" (immaculate purity).

This was the most unique feature of the life of the white-turbanned saint of Iran. It reflected itself in the marvellous progress which the Irani made in all spheres of life and is this day the principal feature of the modern Parsee who marches abreast of his Hindu cousin in all



walks of life *with his own grit, merit and faith in the Supreme as his safeguards*. His is an attitude of adaptation to environment, for he cannot renounce the solemn duty of the custody and care of nature's resources Zoroaster's solemn bequest to him. Following the mighty spiritual warrior he has dared entry in the contest in all fields, economic, educational, social and political, refuted in the supreme, purifying and life-giving blazing energy, a feature which puts him in sharp contrast with his converted Persian cousin now guided by tradition and kismet.

*Mohammad (570—632 A. D.)*

The God-mad spiritual giant of Arabia incarnated in himself the principle of self-surrender to God. He treated his body as an instrument of the Divine to carry out His purposes on this plane. In his eyes all goodness in his body activity was God's and all error his, due to weakness of the flesh. His whole being was so full of Him that he simply could not bear his tribe the *Qorish* swearing allegiance to idols. As their opposition grew he became a most uncompromising foe of idolatry. On accession to political power, he made renunciation of idolatry a primary condition of establishment of amicable relations, in his dealings with the Arab tribes in peace or in war. And whenever a tribe expressed fear of misfortune, he on its behalf undertook the task of destruction of idols himself, as in Taif. In fact he was so sensitive on this point that he did not enter Mecca itself, until all idols had been removed from the Káaba.

This trait of his became a characteristic of Islam. Indeed the fanatical follower vastly improved upon it.

What was accomplished by mutual agreement and negotiation by the Prophet in the service of Allah on account of unswerving devotion to and living faith in His single supremacy, was sought to be done by him in the form of an ultimatum "Islam, tribute or the sword" in the service of Mammon. The idol question became a paying proposition in the hands of greed and political ambition, which under glamour of success, carefully trained the average Muslim mind—more specially the impious lot—into treating iconoclasm as an act of piety and an idolator an object of pity and scorn. Meanwhile the Muslim hero-worshipper quite imperceptibly, took to paying homage to and supplicating for boons before the tomb of his cherished saint or bowing before the annual mock coffins (Tazias) in honor of Imam Husain, the great Martyr of Islam.

The Light of Arabia who owned nothing having given up all sense of dominion or possession and who lived not for himself, but for fulfilment of orders Divine as he conceived them, commenced his mission in very inhospitable surroundings. Disowned by his own people (*Qoriesh*) he had his early success amongst their slaves, and laid the foundation of the principle of equality in treatment on the ground of a common faith amongst his followers which he faithfully observed in his daily normal activity. The treatment of the converted slave (e.g., Bilal or Zaid) on a footing of equality with the choicest of the *Qoriesh* and the Prophet's own blood relations had an effect so remarkable, that even the most lordly including the Khalifa—custodian of the Prophet's mantle—did not think it derogatory to bend down before his Maker in the company of his meanest

servant, whether in the house of God (Mosque) or outside.

Throughout the whole history of Islam, this principle of equality has acted as a great restraining force on the claim of the *Qoriesh* of a divine right of rule, that of families, or dynasties to rule over others, and that of the noble or the zemindar to play the ruler over their muslim fellow-subjects. The Arab never reconciled himself to it and tried to introduce distinctions in the social sphere. But on the whole it has kept the ambitions of blue blood in check and the spirit of the commoner high.

Want of settled government in Arabia, thrust upon the Jewel of the desert the responsibility of ruler and magistrate in Medina. Accident turned him into a political leader. He was compelled to tack on leadership of his people to his apostolic functions. His small band of *Mahajirin*\* (refugees) and *Ansar*† (helpers) soon found it necessary to fight for its very existence against the *Qoriesh* and other tribes who besides being richer in men and resources had the tacit support of the Jewish allies of the prophet and the secret assistance of the Hypocrites (*Munafiqin*)‡ led by Abdullah-bin-

\* The band of three hundred Meccan Muslims who had followed the Prophet on his flight to Medina.

† The residents of Medina, who adopted the faith, swore allegiance to the Prophet on his arrival in Medina and gave shelter to the refugees.

‡ The party of Abdullah-bin-Ubbay, who was a claimant to the chiefship of Medina before the Prophet's arrival there, but ultimately thought it discreet to adopt the faith and swear allegiance to Mohammad as chief. It was believed by the Prophet that the profession of faith of this party was only nominal and so they were called *Hypocrites*. He was always dissatisfied with their con-

Ubbay, the prophet's political rival in Medina who had nominally accepted the faith.

Living in a country poor in natural wealth and water, supply of food and other necessities even for the frugal life of the desert became a pressing problem for the muslims amidst such hostile surroundings.

By nature easily excitable, and full of fervour and enthusiasm for the *new faith*, with traditions of tribal jealousy, blood feuds, and reliance on their strong arm alone for protection and redress, and unassisted by any previous moral or religious literature to serve as guide of conduct, the Muslims grew into a band of armed warriors of the faith and entered into that most remarkable duel with the idolatrous Arabs and Jews, which kept the Prophet busy during the whole of his nine years' ministry at Medina. Comradeship in arms and common danger against a determined and active enemy gave rise to a new bond of faith on the lines of the old tribal bond and the protracted struggle inevitably led to the growth of solidarity of the Muslims against the non-muslim, and made his possession and property a fit object of plunder under those desert conditions.

Absence of any public authority to redress wrongs and other local conditions connected with the nature of the country and character of the people, necessitated the seventy and odd encounters (*Ghazdah* and *Siryah*) in nine years which in the honest judgment of the prophet were inevitable in the interests of peace and security. But his policy in these local quarrels with the *Qoriesh*, their allies and the recalcitrant Jews of Medina and duct and has given expression to it in many passages of the Quran. There is a chapter named after them in the holy book.

Khyber was after his death, perverted to selfish ends and formulated into a proposition of general application by a politically-minded clergy elated with victory, full of scorn for the non-Muslim and slave to the letter of the great man's deeds with momentous consequences to the world. The activities of their model man, shorn of their limiting character took such a firm root in the mind of the unthinking in Islam, that the population could be worked up into this mood by an unscrupulous and fanatical mulla or designing politician without trouble. An appeal to the cupidity of the needy, promising relief here and hereafter at the cost of the non-believer, the abandoned of God—for whom he had reserved a well-known region of eternal fire—in return for service to Islam, seldom failed in its effect. Crusade (jihad) against the non-believer was treated as affording relief in both the worlds. Lure of *Kaffir* wealth and fertile lands with water in plenty here and enjoyments of heaven hereafter carried the thirsty Arab raider far west across the borders of France and far east into India in the service of Allah and the Prophet. No dynamite ever invented has proved so annihilating in its effect, so destructive of peace, security, and human life as this appeal to serve God and make provision here and hereafter by the law of organised violence. Nothing is easier now for a clever politician or a maulvi than to sow the seeds of distrust and dissension in the mind of an ignorant Muslim against his non-Muslim neighbour. The catching cry of religion in danger becomes a rallying ground of the unthinking for furtherance of the designs of ambition and greed. Yet no unprejudiced student of Islam would hesitate to accept the view that nothing whatever could have induced the kindly and humane

Prophet who loved all and knew not what self was, and whose sole object, awake or asleep, was to serve his Maker to consciously inculcate a doctrine so morally perverse and destructive of harmony and good-will.

Equality of treatment, common danger from a determined enemy, and lure of non-Muslim wealth proved strong bulwarks for the solidarity of Islam in its early stages. In these are to be traced the roots of Islamic brotherhood. But when there was no non-believer left to fight or plunder which served to maintain the solidarity and brotherhood as in West-Asia, Muslim society tended to become a prey to civil strife or life of inertia and sensualism. It appears that throughout the course of history the brotherhood has tended to be active as against the non-muslim only but not for the internal growth of Muslim society. It shows activity against external impact but when left to itself it has served to hinder individual growth by infusing vitality into the dead hand of custom and tradition, which, it seems, was never the idea at the back of the Prophet's mind when he gave his memorable parting message on 11th Dhulhijja Hijra X, March 630, to the pilgrims assembled at Mina on the occasion of the farewell *pilgrimage* to Mecca:—

"Ye people! hearken to my words, your lives and property are sacred and inviolable amongst one another until the end of time. . . . .

"Ye people! hearken to my speech and comprehend the same. Know that every Muslim is the brother of every other Muslim. All of you are on the same equality; (as he pronounced these words, he raised his arms aloft

and placed the fore-finger of one hand, as an emblem of equality, on the fore-finger of the other) ye are one brotherhood."

The Prophet's attitude towards his own blood relations and fellow-tribesmen (*Qoriesh*) who would not leave him in peace for a moment, has had a most remarkable effect upon the mentality of his followers. Change of belief has become synonymous with total severance of all ties, including common ancestry and tradition. The source of inspiration no longer remains the past deeds of the non-believing ancestor, but of those who profess the same faith, no matter what their country, what their race and what their family tradition. There is a sudden stoppage of the flow of life along the old channels and its commencement afresh in a new direction, which has had rather unhealthy and denationalising consequences, and has perhaps affected mental growth. There is an attitude of aloofness, a stranger feeling with the old kith and kin. *There is a moral transformation which makes brothers strangers in their own home.* Ram Sarup becoming Rahmatullah, begins to think in terms of the exploits of the Arab, the Afghan and the Turk and looks to them for inspiration and not to the non-believing heroes of his own nation. Ties of race and country are broken asunder, *the literature of the country loses its old appeal and charm by a single stroke.* Allegiance of the heart is given to the person and not to the country. The original tribal bond amidst which Islam grew has been broadened into a bond of common faith regardless of *situ* turning brothers into suspicious neighbours. Qualms of conscience are quieted down by reference to some episode or other of

the Prophet's attitude towards relations (Abu Lahab) or former friends or tribesmen (Abu Jahl, Al Mughaira, Abu Sufyan and a host of others) without the least regard to local circumstances and time. *This attitude has tended to make the general outlook of the average Muslim exclusive, self-regarding, and fanatical.*

Similarly the Prophet's faith in his doctrines as the whole truth from God, held sincerely with a fervour all his own led him to regard a renegade as an undesirable person, specially because of his political difficulties and the trouble of espionage and false prophets. But with the phenomenal military success of the Arab arms, after his death this unfriendly attitude developed into an ordinance of death in the hands of the administrator and the legist which instilled so mortal a fear of entertaining and expressing free opinions or critically understanding the teaching of Scripture, that in course of time, it led to general mental inertia, diminishing courage of conviction, and a desire to advance in philosophy and science. After the first period during which non-Muslims of high intellect adopted the faith of the conqueror or Arabs emulating the example of their non-Muslim neighbours, absorbed Greek and Latin philosophy and science, when Islam was fully established, there seems to have been a progressive decline in philosophical speculation and scientific investigation in Islamic countries including Turkey. In spite of immediate contact with the Christian West, where intellectual and scientific advancement has been phenomenal in recent centuries, Turkey remained unaffected by the mighty wave, and refused to be roused from its mental stupor until recent years.



The "Seal of the prophets" was compelled to inculcate the principle of blind acceptance, on his personal authority, of matters of which he had immediate comprehension because of his purity and high spirituality, on unthinking, mentally untrained barbarians, because he was sick unto death of the annoying dialectics of the *Qoriesh*. In spite of his constant and unremitting endeavour lasting thirteen years he had failed to stop their barren disputations. The whole struggle is painted in language of remarkable intensity and fervour tinged with righteous anger in the *Meccan Suras* of the Book of God (Qoran). The principle shorn of its accidental and limiting conditions of application has had the effect of making whole masses of men develop an unthinking, sentimental regard for the written word and stop the flow of mental energy in constructive channels.

This load on freedom of opinion and thought has made the *Shariat* supreme in Islam and the *maulvi* or *mulla* a wielder of great power in the normal life of an average Muslim. It has affected zest for play of the mind and slowly but surely brought about a sense of self-diffidence and suspicion against the intellectuality and subtlety of the non-muslim which the muslim intelligentsia has sought to balance by developing communal consciousness and securing special privilege as a safeguard to hold its own in the struggle of life.

Where it holds supreme power and has been thrown on its own resources, it has found it imperative to make important breaches in the *Shariat* and fall back on the inner spirit of the teaching, in the light of altered circumstances, to take its proper place in the new economic

structure of the modern world. But wherever the position is otherwise, it has hugged to bosom the very enemy which is responsible for this state of things, to marshal mass sympathy in support of its claim to power and privilege. But the device is most dangerous, as acting like insidious poison it may eat into the vitals of the Faith itself within the fold and create fresh problems for the future by putting the non-muslim on guard and making him justly suspicious of the artful manipulation of religion for a policy of class aggrandizement.

Quarrels with the Jews of Medina and Khyber and their refusal to listen to the Prophet in the matter of interest on their loans which was a heavy burden on the poor debtors, produced a feeling of abhorrence in his mind against usury. To the eye of this generous and kind-hearted man of the people usurious interest appeared as a symbol of oppression and cruelty and so, influenced by purely local conditions and peculiar circumstances, he forbade it in the interests of his followers for their own pecuniary good. Pulled out of its context the doctrine seriously affected the fortunes of Muslims in all climes. It rendered trade and financial operations on a large scale almost impossible. Necessitated at the time by the keen eye of the Arabian genius, for the good of his followers, it has become a halter round the neck of the Muslim merchant and made the financial condition of the average muslim insecure.

The Prophet's truce\* with the *Qoriesh* at Al Hodeibiya a harmless, open and aboveboard, transaction

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\*In the sixth year of his flight (March 628 A.D.) Mohammad with fifteen hundred followers proceeded towards Mecca to perform (*Umra*) the Lessor Pilgrimage but was not allowed to pro-

which caused considerable heartburning and disappointment both to the Sahaba (companions) and the rank and file, because of its pro-Qoriesh character, and breach of which by the Qoriesh led to the expedition which resulted in the conquest of Mecca later, has from time to time threatened to become a model of the mode of dealing with the non-Muslim to advantage. . Mental reservation in dealings has threatened to assume an ethical stamp, creating an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust. Yet that noble soul, who knew no self-interest, nor artifice, a plain simple servant of Allah, living only to carry out His commands could not have had the remotest idea that his generous action would be perverted out of shape by calculating politicians and designing mullahs to ignoble ends putting the Muslim in the wrong with the non-Muslims and make Islam a target of ethical attacks.

ceed beyond Al Hodeibiya a stage march from Mecca. The Qoriesh suspected the purpose of his visit and showed determination to die to the last man rather than allow him to enter their city. Ultimately after prolonged negotiations a truce was signed in the following terms:

"In Thy Name, O God! these are the conditions of peace between Mohammad, son of Abdullah, and Suhel, son of Amr. War shall be suspended for ten years. Whosoever wisheth to join Mohammad, or enter into treaty with him, shall have liberty to do so; and likewise whosoever wisheth to join Qoriesh or enter into treaty with them. If one goeth over to Mohammad without the permission of his guardian he shall be sent back to his guardian; but should any of the followers of Mohammad return to Qoriesh, they shall not be sent back. Mohammad shall retire this year without entering the city. In the coming year, Mohammad may visit Mecca, he and his followers for three days, during which Qoriesh will retire and leave the city to them. But they may not enter it with any weapons, save those of the traveller, namely, to each a sheathed sword."

### *Mahabir*

His fundamental teaching was compassion for the living and renunciation of worldly pleasures, as sorrow-giving and source of bondage to the world to the point of extreme self-mortification. These teachings he embodied in his life and the result has been that the Jain has ever been ready with purse-strings open for the relief of animals and the poor. Charity is second nature to him, and killing an act of the utmost abhorrence, so much so indeed that the Kshatriya kingdoms of Gujerat professing the faith of non-violence allowed themselves to be wiped out under the onset of Islam which believed in violence.

### *Shankaracharya*

Identity of the Self and the Supreme was a matter of living faith to this incarnation of activity in the cause of Truth. He recognised no duality even between what appears to us as inanimate matter and energy and the Supreme. In his eyes all duality was the product of ignorance. He in all. All in him. He is all. But he was an orthodox Brahmin, and because of his profound learning and singular purity of his own life he believed in the superiority of the Brahmin above all men. Even while preaching his doctrine of universal identity,

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After two years, Beni Bekr a tribe allied to the Qoriesh assisted by a party of the Qoriesh in disguise attacked Khozáa a tribe allied to Mohammad and slew several men. A deputation of the injured tribe waited on him and pleaded that the treacherous murders be avenged. Mohammad gave his word and in spite of the entreaties of Abu Sufyan, the leader of the Qoriesh stuck to his promise and attacked Mecca (January 630 A.D.).

a step higher even than universal brotherhood, he refrained from emphasising that the basis of caste was man's virtue and calling and not the accident of a womb. The result was that this doctrine of supreme grandeur which if lived by his followers and preached after his death in the right manner, might have lifted man to a glorious pedestal treating distinctions due to the mud-case (body) as fleeting and liable to change by proper nurture of the self in suitable environment, indirectly helped in permanently stratifying Hindu society into watertight compartments.

Caste has reduced the doctrine to barren theory and introduced a conflict between principle and practice which makes the non-Hindus smile at the tall claims of the Hindu theorist. In course of time this inglorious mixture of Vedantism and orthodox Brahminism has taken away all incentive to serve fellow-men. Instead of filling the Vedantist with a burning desire to lift the down-trodden by preaching the dignity of the self encased in a mud structure which never could have the least effect upon the pure, changeless, illumined, spark divine, it has taken away all incentive to do any service at all, on the ground that the whole manifestation was illusory even in the ordinary sense, a perversion of the true position of the self-illumined Shankara, and has become a strong bulwark of obscurantism lending weight to old customs and practices whether harmful or otherwise.

Tradition and custom, because it favoured the Brahmin, proved the stronger and requisitioned theory into its service. Sense of duty and sense of service towards fellow-beings as a meritorious trait of character,

yielded place to blind inactivity and neglect of society. The noble example of service set by the great Acharya (teacher) himself who devoted every moment of his life to service of Truth, is carefully explained away on the ground that the illustrious Hindu savant was an incarnation of Shankar and so an exception, that the time to serve man arrives when the seeker has attained the Supreme which may never happen and until then the whole universe of householders should honor itself by serving the indolent seeker with cash and kind.

The metaphysics of evanescence and illusion which has acquired a subtle hold on the people instead of proving a bulwark against the inroads of selfish activity has become an excuse for inactivity, lack of ambition and total disregard for social solidarity. It has contributed to the total annihilation of political power and attrition of Hindu society into an amorphous mass without power of resistance and exposed to the inroads of faiths of foreign origin which today have become a most formidable problem and almost made the Hindu a stranger in his own home. So deep rooted indeed is the disease that immediately there is a change of belief the converted Hindu is totally cut off from the fold and finds nothing common remaining. He is treated as a total stranger, a foreigner from across the border, settled in the country, without any tie of culture and tradition with his old Hindu kin. The designing politician in his hunt for power and influence firmly grasping this self-destructive trait of Hinduism is out to introduce this utterly false and mischievous fiction of two nations of different racial and cultural origin brought together by historical causes, living side by side and justly anxious to *preserve*

*their original identity and culture* in the foundation of the new order, with the studied indifference of his Hindu colleague.\*

### *Vaishnava Saints*

Similarly in the lives of Vaishnava saints and reformers of Hinduism, devotion to the Supreme appears to have taken the form of service to an idol as the symbol of Divinity and cultivation of a life of great saintliness of character by renunciation, self-restraint, and sense-control. Service of fellow-men did not become the ruling principle of their lives, as the highest form of devotion to the Supreme. The Supreme was not realised by vicarious service, serving Him through the service of man. The consequences of this attitude have been momentous. Piety has become associated with pilgrimage to shrines and holy places, with mechanical adoration of brick and stone and feeding of idlers. The whole has become a mass of lifeless ritual. A whole army of deified Mahants, Gurus and their propagandist *chelas* (disciples) is maintained in idleness and luxury with disastrous effect upon the moral and religious life of the people.

How often does it enter the head of a Vaishnava Sadhu or Mahant rolling in wealth that he has important social and moral obligations towards the householders,

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\*The Mohammadans of the eastern tracts and of Madras were almost entirely descendants of converts from Hinduism, by no means a large proportion even of the Mohammadans of the Punjab are really of foreign blood, the estimate of the Punjab Superintendent being about 15 per cent. The proportion advances of course as one proceeds further northwest.—(Census of India, Part I, Report 1921).

of necessity busy in their own individual pursuits? His sole care seems to be the purse of his lucky disciple. For the rest he is left to his own resources to do the best he can to keep his head above water in the struggle of life. In corporate matters his is an attitude of supineness at best, if not one of assistance to the forces of opposition, if his pecuniary interests demand it. In case of the devotee's success he is always ready to oblige him by helping himself to a share. As regards his spiritual influence little need be said. The greater the ignorance and superstition, the greater his influence on the devotee. He is no shepherd in the fold to be sure, he is altogether a non-commendable metamorphosis of the original saints of hallowed memory. It is none of his business to realise that real devotion consists in giving one's whole life to maintenance and propagation of true Dharma—non-fruit regarding activity for world harmony—though he ought to know that it is so supreme a good that even Vishnu Himself incarnates to protect the good and punish the wicked—the designing self-seeker—that it is of such efficacy that a man devoting himself to it is liberated for ever and is not reborn after shedding off this body (Ch. IV, Sh. 10). He wants the sensual joys here as liberation can take care of itself in the hereafter.

### Conclusion

The followers of the Teacher are seldom able to reach his spiritual heights and attain his purity of being. Often they fail to fathom his springs of action. If able to do so they find themselves incapable of moulding their actions accordingly due to lack of self-control amidst



the play of appetite and passion, craving for worldly possessions and attachment to family or social group. They find it difficult to lift themselves beyond these, and take to imitating the external acts of the Teacher; his style of living, his manner, food, dress; his attitude towards the different relations—family, friend community, and enemies.

The unsophisticated and the fanatic find satisfaction in imitating their model man in this manner.

The brainy followers marshal this powerful instinct of the mass in support of their ambitious designs. In their hands the original acts of the Teacher are perverted out of shape and achieve a result the exact opposite of what he contemplated therefrom.

In their dealings with third parties, both protest about the purity of their motives, one out of simplicity and the other blinded by greed and ambition. While the party affected—faced with its own problems—simply refuses to take the same view.

This shows how important it is for man to be careful in his conduct. The greater his influence on others for good or ill, the greater is his responsibility. Man has to live not for himself so much, as for others, because he leaves his impress on the world and makes it better or worse than he found it.

There can be no stronger check and safer guide for man than the fundamental doctrine propounded by Krishna, namely, action without attachment dedicated to the Supreme Governor of this world cycle, or in the interest of world harmony, in consciousness of his eternity and the transient nature of the relations with the

body and the world outside, including therein all relations of family, kin, class, community and larger units.

.It is to emphasise this that the *Liberated* come down below and guide mankind.

It is obvious from the above illustrations, why Krishna was so anxious that Arjun should act righteously and illustrated his teaching by the example of Janak. *Verily the effect of the conduct of men of eminence in human society is far-reaching for good and ill.*

Now to emphasise the point and make a lasting impression the whole of the teaching in Ch. III, Sh. 4—21 is brought to a focus in the personality of Krishna himself. He is a *Mukt* (liberated) but acts for the good of the world and serves as a model of action without attachment, so that no doubt may remain in Arjun's mind as to the superiority of selfless activity and its efficacy for liberation from bondage. Thus the Master delivers himself.

### Krishna: Model Man

न मे पार्यास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।  
 नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥२२॥  
 यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।  
 मम कर्मानुवर्तन्ते, मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥२३॥  
 उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।  
 सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥२४॥



disciplined, illumined with such knowledge of the self as I have imparted, a man may safely be depended upon to choose the right and proper course when face to face with a difficult situation under any circumstances. He will rise above his narrow personal or factional interests and would do only what is ultimately good for all.

NOTE.—This is a most powerful appeal to Arjun, to be mindful of how he acts as it would have very serious consequences as stated by him in Ch. III, Sh. 24. For if under such circumstances he took to *Sannyas* (renunciation) and became inactive, people would think it was a virtue. Vindication of warrior duty (*Dharma*) would become impossible and vice would rule the world, gradually bringing about its ruin, a result the reverse of what he contemplated from his flight.

Therefore a passive state of non-action is totally ruinous to the self, when universalised it can only end in bringing corporate activity to a stop, ending in the annihilation of the society which has become its victim.

### Teaching by Example

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।

कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथाऽसक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥२५॥

*As the ignorant attached to action act, O Bharat,  
So the wise desiring world-harmony should act  
unattached. 25*

Every man so long as he is encased in the body has to act. The outward sense-activity of all is the same, but the inner motive directing it may be different. A wise man, though he may have no end of his own to serve, should so act that the law of mutual service may reign and the world following his example remain established in harmony. So the advice is to act for the good of the world without attachment.

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसंगिनाम् ।

जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥२६॥

*Generating no unsettlement of reason in the  
ignorant attached to action*

*The wise should prompt them to action by  
steadily engaging in action. 26*

Ordinary man says to himself: I shall perform this action and thereby attain that object. A wise man without confounding him by talking abstract ethics, should by his own conduct demonstrate to him, that man's object so far as it is necessary for efficient discharge of duty to self and others is truly gained by keeping in mind the interests of all while acting. Without the co-operation of others it is impossible for man to gain anything, and this co-operation is secured easily if they are satisfied that in giving it they are equipping him better for their service which in turn would make them better men. Once the idea of mutuality takes root in the mind, the good of all would soon become the spring of all action and not the imperative demands of the body and relations, which are the primary cause of attachment. His consciousness would gradually expand, and treating body activity as a play of nature in the interests of sentient life, he would dedicate it to the service of the Supreme Director.

### Who is the Actor

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।

अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताऽहमिति मन्यते ॥२७॥

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।

गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥२८॥

*\* By the qualities of nature are all actions*

*performed.*

*The ego-blinded Self thinketh, "I am the doer." 27*

*A knower, O mighty-armed! of the real nature  
of the division of qualities and functions,*

*The qualities rove in qualities knowing so*

*remains unattached. 28*

Qualities—Senses, mind and reason.

Functions—Activity of the aforesaid in the objective world.

Senses, mind and reason are at bottom made of the same stuff as outside objects. Qualities as senses rove in qualities as objects.

### Don't Confound the Unwise

प्रकृतेर्गुणसंभूदाः संजन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।

तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान्कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् ॥२९॥

*The deluded by the nature qualities get lost in  
the functions of qualities.*

*These slow-witted partial knowers, the whole*

*knowers should not shake. 29*

Body, mind, senses, reason are all material, these are responsible for the activity, man is only a director at best. He takes for granted the existence of the body, organs of action, the senses, the energy required for activity, the universe without and the Power regulating

it. Identifying with the body as really his self he calls himself actor which is pure egoism—for he was there in the “drop body” in the womb, when he could not possibly do what he does now as a full grown-up person. All the parts are equally essential. Absence of anyone would mean cessation of activity altogether. He treats the body as a whirlpool or eddy in the ocean of Nature in which matter and energy are constantly whirling in and out making the eddy perpetually active. The soul inside it deluded, identifies himself with it and considers it as his own activity. Those who are deluded by the qualities of Nature consider themselves whirlpools, and get involved in it. The wise should not disturb such unknowing persons of petty understanding. For it only confuses them and tends to make their actions ineffective and devoid of force by unsettling their minds.

### The Teaching

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।

निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥३०॥

*Dedicating all actions to Me with mind abiding  
in the self,*

*Without expectation or my-ness, fight shorn of  
doubt fever. 30*

What is called human activity is in essence really an interplay of two portions of nature and this activity is inherent in it, independently of man's volition. This interactivity is so arranged, that sentient life satisfies all its needs by its means. All man has to do is to contribute his individual quota to the total activity. Back of all this total activity of the cycle of the Universe is the

Creator who originated it and so arranged it that if not interfered with by wrong action it will be a giver of plenty to all. It is necessary to avoid blind and ignorant activity to obtain perfect good. Human activity therefore should be by way of offering to the Supreme who has gifted the body, in consciousness of one's eternity.

### • Release from Bondage

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः ।

श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥३१॥

*Those who ever practise this teaching of mine,*

*Full of faith and uncavilling are liberated from*

*(bondage of) action. 31*

### Fate of a Detractor

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।

सर्वज्ञान विमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥३२॥

*But who carping and critical do not practise this*  
*teaching of mine*

*Devoid of all true knowledge regard such*  
*ignorant folk doomed. 32*

This admonition is a death-blow to all presumption of superiority on the basis of color and caste. Irrespective of caste all men as such have a path declared open, provided they follow the teaching. *The teaching is addressed to man.* It is a message of grave warning to erring Man, the mud-worshipper (caste or color body), the money-grasper, the land-grabber, and labour-exploiter, to all who are ever on the look-out to misuse



their favourable position to appropriate the fruit of the activity of the mass for their transient ends, in ignorance of their place in the world-order and their relation to the body-chariot.

It is a message of hope to the untouchable and the down-trodden, whether because of caste or color, to the disinherited of the earth—the poor, the landless, the exploited—the suffering and the sorrowing. They are all told that the Self in the body—the seat of all sorrow and suffering—is unaffected and pure like unto the lily in muddy soil. They have only to become conscious of their true nature to realise their might and the unlimited extent of their riches and possessions. They are disinherited *because of ignorance, their inferiority complex, poverty and suffering are self-imposed* and can be driven away by taking the reins of government of their kingdom—body—in their hands and establishing dominion over the world by realising its true nature and its relation to them.

*Caste mark, fair skin, bank-balance, rent-rolls, industrial plants are no means to get rid of the chain of bondage to the Universe but non-fruit-regarding activity in the interest of world-harmony or making personal body-activity an expression of the will divine operating within, to fulfil its beneficent purpose of maintaining the cycle.* For the former are a total denial of the beneficent purpose of the cycle operated by a just and kindly Providence and ignore man's place therein, by *setting up the body-instrument as an end in itself to the prejudice of the Self. It is worshipping mud for its own sake and making the king a prisoner in his own domain.* It is pure theft and "eating of sin," by no means very

commendable traits, compliments which the parties affected would without hesitation reject and *yet this is the fundamental truth of their position.*

The sorrowing, the disinherited of the earth are told in the form of a categorical imperative that not in these lies the way to peace and happiness, but in the latter and poised reason, in control of sense, in regarding all activity by whatever name called and howsoever looked down upon, as emanating from the Divine, as an element of the total Divine activity equally essential like the others and all together directed to the good of the universe. *Not the outward motion of the organs of action whatever the form, but the inner motive is the determining factor.*

If the inner motive of the activity of the latter class is selfless, rooted in the divine purpose, there is a promise of joy ineffable. The first in spite of their rich trappings and high-sounding adjectives narrating their worldly might and power are the "*devoid of knowledge,*" "*ignorant,*" "*doomed,*" "*thieves,*" "*eaters of sin,*" if the inner motive is not pure. If there is evenness in indigence and affluence and there is the idea of a trust at the back of the mind then the position is alright, for then the miseries of the other class in so far as they are due to them disappear at once and harmony is restored.

Here is a doctrine of infinite grandeur bringing pride down and lifting lowliness up, declaring man to be master of his own destiny, and unfurling the standard of victory and world dominion for him, even though engaged in tasks termed dirty and ignoble by an ignorant

world only, if they are done for the sake of the world in fulfilment of purpose Divine.

### Character Determines Action

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥३३॥

*Even a learned man acts according to the bent  
of his nature*

*All creatures follow nature, what shall restraint  
avail? 33*

Mere theoretical appreciation of the theory underlying human action (action without attachment as dedicated service to the Supreme, for world-harmony) by knowing the nature of the three eternal verities—Self, God and the Universe—and their inter-relations by means of reason is not enough to enable a man to behave as self-illuminated. Action in actual life depends upon co-operation of the body, senses, mind and reason, all of which have acquired habitual modes of reaction to external situations and problems. Dispositions and tendencies formed as a result of experience of past lives, as well as the conscious and unconscious effect of environment and our own physical and mental activity influence conduct. They are products of the lasting impressions of our desires and aims upon the mind. In other words, character gradually formed determines our individual activity at a given moment.

Such is man, a complex of innumerable influences leaving their traces behind, in memory, giving him a distinct outlook on life and disposing him to respond in certain definite ways. The disposition so formed evokes

emotional complexes and produces feelings and sentiments round the object of desire which color his action. Any abnormal incident may temporarily throw him out of gear but the moment that influence is removed and the original equilibrium restored, he begins to move in the old grooves. If while in this condition he adopts a line of conduct in haste which is not in accord with his normal mood then there arises trouble demanding fresh adjustment.

This irresistible coercion into an abnormal course of conduct is itself an egoistic expression of one's normal disposition. The determining factor even here is the same old enemy, egoism. It asserts itself in this new guise. The beggar's bowl is forced upon Arjun, for its own honourable escape from a tangle out of sheer helplessness. Egoism has undertaken the task of metamorphosing Arjun by promise of a glorious victory in the moral sphere. The proper way of control is not violent restraint at the time, but timely action before, in the shape of moulding of habit and disposition by conscious effort.

### The Key to Perfection

इन्द्रियेन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।

तयोर्न कशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥ ३४ ॥

*Attachment and aversion of the senses to sense-objects are phenomena inherent in nature*

*Yield not to their dominion, they are enemies on the path. 34*

Arjun, your present difficulty is due to the interplay of affection and aversion. You resolved to fight to

gain certain ends. You had nothing but abhorrence for the wicked Kurus who had established the reign of fraud and deceit and destroyed the ancient traditions of your illustrious family, by performing wicked deeds. So you vowed to destroy them. But now that you are doubtful of attaining your cherished aims, you are broken down from despair and purposeless slaughter of kinsmen, however vicious, appears sinful to you. As this means a life of penury and want, away from the haunts of men where you may be safe from their taunts, you naturally think of renunciation and alms. For the time an ascetic's life attracts you, as that accords with your present feelings. Your egoistic pride, that by so acting you will be doing something virtuous and morally praiseworthy in contrast with the Kurus though rich in material possessions, has fortified you in contemplating this course. But this course appears good so long as the outside influence lasts. The moment it withers away and you regain your normal mood you will find yourself in a still worse position. Therefore safety lies in controlling the senses and restraining them from becoming the playthings of affection and aversion.

### Fitness: The Test of Action

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥३५॥

*Better one's (natural) duty seeming devoid of merit,*

*Than another's appearing (meritorious) and well-discharged.*

*Preferable is death in performing one's duty,  
The duty of, another is fraught with fear.*

Your duty as warrior in response to the demand of the present situation appears to be destitute of merit as it involves slaughter and the state of a begging ascetic appears good as that would lead to the desired result (avoidance of slaughter). But the foundation of that is the doubt and delusion which have taken hold of your personality. With these bases removed you will begin to see in the Kurus not only the deadly enemies of the present Pandavas but of the Bharat family, who have tarnished its fair name for ever, and set an example of fraud, force and cheating to coming generations besides compelling you to lead a life of ignoble obscurity. Then you will feel this newly adopted "Dharma" a most awkward encumbrance and what you consider good now, will become a source of perennial torment to you.

Man's conduct should be self-determined, the fruit of deliberate thought and careful weighing of the pros and cons with due regard to his capacity and the imperative demands of the situation. It should not be the plaything of an impression suddenly flung upon the mind by an erroneous interpretation of an external situation, for under excitement the reading is bound to be erroneous and the judgment likely to be carped, leading to a sinful course of conduct.

### The Question

अर्जुन उवाच

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।

अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥ ३६ ॥

**Arjun said—**

*Then impelled by what does man move in sin?  
Against his wish, O Vêrshaneya, yet led forcibly  
into it. 36*

### Desire

श्रीभगवानुवाच

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।  
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥३७॥

**The Lord said—**

*It is craving, it is anger, born of passion (Raj)  
quality,  
All consuming, most sinful, know this the  
enemy on earth. 37*

The cause of all sin or wrong action in this world is desire which when it finds its fruition thwarted, gives rise to anger against the thwarting object. All antagonism that is noticeable in the world is the product of desire and the obstacle it meets in its path of fulfilment.

Desire for worldly objects is always to meet some needs of the body. The body however is constantly changing and therefore its wants too are changing. Every new phase gives rise to a new craving and a new mode of its satisfaction.

**Manu says—**

[ न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति ।  
हविषा कृष्णकर्मेव भूय एवाभिवर्द्धते ॥  
यत् पृथिव्यां त्रीहिय्यवं हिरण्यं पशवः स्त्रियः ।  
नालमेकस्य तत्सर्वमिति मत्वा शमं व्रजेत् ॥

“Desire can never be satiated or cooled down by the enjoyment of objects. But as fire blazes forth the more when fed with butter and wood, so it grows the more it feeds on objects of enjoyment.

If all the foodstuffs of the earth, all precious metals, all animals and all beautiful women, were to pass into the possession of a man endued with desire they would fail in giving him satiety.”]

### *Its Operation*

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथाऽऽदर्शो मलेन च ।  
 यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥ ३८ ॥  
 आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।  
 कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥ ३९ ॥  
 इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।  
 एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥ ४० ॥

*As fire is enveloped by smoke, or mirror by dust  
 As foetus by membrane, so is this enveloped by it. 38  
 Knowledge is enveloped by this perpetual enemy  
 of the knowing  
 The insatiable fire of desire, O Kunti-born. 39  
 Senses, mind and understanding are its seats  
 called,  
 Through these, enveloping knowledge, it deludes  
 the body-dweller. 40*

Desire when it gets hold of man, hides knowledge of his true nature from him. Man under its influence forgets the beneficent nature of the Universe-Cycle and



his place therein. He becomes heedless of the fundamental fact that God is the ultimate cause and actor behind the universal activity, and controls the award of fruit of action.

It deludes him into the belief that pleasure, pain, profit and loss, which are but body affections and never touch the Self, and the needs of the body, are his own. He forgets that when in womb he had not this paraphernalia, nor had he these wants. Then he considers that their satisfaction depends upon his own activity. He regards the world outside as antagonistic to him and therefore pays no heed to its interests in the choice of means. But *he quite arbitrarily expects it to conform to his mode of thinking and see its good in serving him according to his dictation of the moment.* Instead of treating himself an organ of the Universe-cycle, he begins to imagine as if it existed solely for him and he for himself. He adopts an unnatural and ignorant course as every one being equally free in his choice of desire and means, becomes a law unto himself, and, if he likewise thinks in the same strain and has the same antagonism, then the whole world, would become an arena of conflicting desires creating utter confusion. First, no want of mortal man could ever be satisfied, and if at all it is satisfied, it could only be by denial of freedom to many by the few by force and exploiting their services—a fruitful source of perennial discontent and misery. So the proper thing is to hunt this cruel enemy in its haunts, and then adopt adequate measures against its nefarious action.

*Its control*

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।

पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानं विज्ञानं नाशनम् ॥ ४१ ॥

*So first disciplining thy senses, O best of Bharats,  
Kill this sinful destroyer of knowledge and  
wisdom. 41*

Sense-control is the one safeguard against its attack, it is the senses which bring man in contact with outside objects which are the fuel of this insatiable fire. If this contact is broken then the battle is won. But this is more easily said than done. How is one to destroy the contact? Such an operation is inherently impossible, for objects must affect the senses so long as life lasts, the senses cannot cease working and working means contact with objects. Is it after all a counsel of despair?

*Method of Control*

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥ ४२ ॥

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।

जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥ ४३ ॥

*The senses are called, subtle, subtler than these is  
the mind,*

*Than mind is subtler reason, than reason is  
subtler that (self). 42*

*Thus knowing him the subtler than reason and  
controlling the mind by the Self,  
Kill desire, O mighty-armed, the foe so hard to  
catch. 43*

Senses are not all in all. Objects may keep on affecting them, but unless mind which is more powerful co-operates with them, no outside message will be delivered within and even when it is delivered, reason which is more powerful may refuse to take notice of it and reject it altogether. Behind reason is the director, the Self of man.

If reason is solely guided by the body needs, then it is a prey to the enemy, but if it is guided by the Self, the Self would determine the needs of the body from the point of view of its efficiency and utility for service of the Supreme, and there would be no field left for the onslaughts of the enemy. So the real thing is cultivation of self-abiding reason. Such reason, fully illumined and uninfluenced by a changing universe without, would make suitable response to the needs of the situation solely with a view to world-harmony. Whatever the form of the outward activity proceeding from such reason it can only result in universal good and save man from the bondage of action by killing desire for fruit, the arch-enemy of mankind.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता० कर्मयोगो नाम तृतीयोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter III—Sung by the Lord designated*  
**YOGA OF ACTION**

## CHAPTER IV

### Yoga of Knowledge of Renunciation of Action

#### अध्याय ४

श्री भगवानुवाच .

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।  
विस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुर्द्विवाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥१॥  
एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।  
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप ॥२॥  
स एवाऽयं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।  
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥३॥

**The Lord said—**

*This undying Yoga I taught to Viwaswat,  
Viwaswat to Manu and Manu to Ikshwaku  
imparted; 1*

*Thus transmitted in succession, the King Sages  
knew it.*

*By the lapse of long period this Yoga  
disappeared from here, O Harasser of foes. 2*

*The same ancient Yoga has been taught this day  
by Me to thee  
Who art My devotee and friend, 'tis a most  
profound Mystery 3*

The reference here is to the Yoga of Equanimity which synthesises Sankhya Yoga and Karma Yoga.

### Arjun's Surprise

अर्जुन उवाच

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।  
कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥ ४ ॥

Arjun said—

*Recent your birth, ancient that of Viwaswat,  
How am I to know Ye taught it at Creation?* 4

### Krishna's Answer

श्री भगवानुवाच

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।  
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परंतप ॥ ५ ॥

The Lord said—

*Many have been my births as well yours,  
O Arjun,  
Those all I know, ye not, O Terror of foes.* 5

Krishna's answer is not that he is the Primeval Being (*Adi Purush*) incarnated in human form. He gives a simple straight answer, putting himself on a par with Arjun in the matter of birth, but distinguishing his case on the ground of knowledge and illumination. This however is not confined to the Supreme alone, but according to the Science of Yoga, is attainable by man through effort. Krishna himself later in Shloka 10 teaches that many men had by requisite training attained

his state. And in Shloka 15 Arjun himself is advised to act according to method and is promised the same goal as reward.

It is also worthy of note in this connection that the incident of Krishna's birth too does not differentiate his case from that of other men. His body came into existence, like that of other mortal men in the usual course [ordinary period of gestation through ordinary channels—(father and mother)].

According to Hindu theory Brahman is immanent and all-pervading. During the period that Krishna was in human form, he also pervaded the Universe. He extended beyond his limited form, it only confined but a fraction of himself. But so do all human forms. For He is all pervading "I reside in the hearts of all" (Chap. XV-15). "The Lord resides in the heart regions of all, revolving them all seated on the wheel by His power" (Ch. XVIII, Sh. 61). Here too there is no distinction.

**Question**—Was not there a self apart from the material frame and God therein?

**Answer**—Man is a spark from the Divine (Chap. XV, Sh. 7) and in that frame there was no more.

**Objection**—But in a frame occupied by God alone, without a human self, there would be no pre-formed dispositions and habits on account of previous lives as in the case of mortal man.

**Answer**—A liberated man has no old dispositions or habits. He is without a body as we understand it, body is necessary for enjoyment of fruit of action, and action does not cling to him. So if he chooses to assume

a body it will be absolutely pure and untainted by previous action.

**Objection**—Then the difference would be in the extent of knowledge.

**Answer**—But as regards knowledge Krishna himself admits that he is not omniscient (Anugita, Ch. I, Shs. 10-13).

### Perfect Man

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।

प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया ॥६॥

*Though unborn, eternal, and Lord of beings,  
Getting into my Nature (Prakriti) I assume  
form by my power. 6*

The sense of the teaching is clarified fully by the following shlokas:—

यदाहि युक्त मात्मानं सम्यक् पश्यति देहं भूत्

न तस्येश्वरः कश्चित त्रैलोक्यस्यापि यः प्रभुः (२४)

अन्यान्याश्चैव तनवो यथेष्टं प्रतिपद्यते

विनिवृत्त्य जरामृत्यू न शोचति न हृष्यति (२५)\*

*When the embodied self, abiding in the self properly sees the self by concentration, then there is no ruler ( ईश्वर ) over him, as he himself becomes the lord of the three regions. (24)*

*He assumes various body-forms at pleasure, and casting aside decay and death neither grieveth nor rejoiceth. (25)*

\* Ashw. Parva, Adh. 20, or Anugita, Adh. 4

A mature conqueror of the three-quality nature (*Gunateet*) attains this state by unwearied exertion for a long time. For when nature ceases to influence him, or disturb his equanimity, he has risen beyond it and become its true master, which is an attribute of the Highest Being also. But this state does not make the man himself the Highest Being. This Highest Being existed even when the self encased in a body was still struggling with nature to rise higher by conquering it. It gives him God-consciousness. The difference between the two is indicated with emphasis in Krishna's answer to Arjun in the following passage of Anugita Ch. I:

कृष्णेन सहितः पार्थः स्वं राज्यं प्राप्य केवलम् ।

तस्यां सभायां दिव्यायां विजहार मुदा युतः २

तत्र कंचित्सभोद्देशं स्वर्गोद्देशसमं नृप ।

यदृच्छया तौ मुदितौ, जग्मतुः स्वजनावृतौ ३

ततः प्रतीतः कृष्णेन सहितः पाण्डवोऽर्जुनः ।

निरीक्ष्य तां सभां रम्यामिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ४

विदितं मे महाबाहो संग्रामे समुपस्थिते ।

माहात्म्यं देवकीपुत्रे तच्च ते रूपमैश्वरम् ५

यत्तु तद्भक्ता प्रोक्तं पुरा केशव सौहृदात् ।

तत्सर्वं पुरुषव्याघ्र नष्टं मे व्यग्रचेतसः ६

मम कौतूहलं त्वस्ति तेऽर्ष्येषु पुनः पुनः ।

भवांस्तु द्वारकां गन्ता नचिरादिव माधव ७



वासुदेव उवाच

श्रावितस्त्वं मया गुह्यं ज्ञापितश्च सनातनम् ।  
 धर्मं स्वरूपिणं पार्थ सर्वलोकांश्च शाश्वतान् ६  
 अब्रुद्धचा यन्न गृह्णीयास्तन्मे सुमहदप्रियम् ।  
 न च साऽद्य पुनर्भूयः स्मृतिर्मे संभविष्यति १०  
 नूनमश्रद्धधानोऽसि दुर्मेधा ह्यसि पाण्डव ।  
 न च शक्यं पुनर्वक्तुमशेषेण धनंजय ११  
 स हि धर्मः सुपर्याप्तो ब्रह्मणः पदवेदने ।  
 न शक्यं तन्मया भूयस्तथा वक्तुमशेषतः १२  
 परं हि ब्रह्म कथितं योगयुक्तेन तन्मया ।  
 इतिहासं तु वक्ष्यामि तस्मिन्नर्थे पुरातनम् १३

The son of Pritha after becoming possessed of his kingdom undisturbed enjoyed himself in the company of Krishna full of delight in that heavenly palace. And once, O King, they happened to go, surrounded by their people, and rejoicing, to a certain portion of the palace which resembled heaven. Then Arjun, the son of Pandu, having surveyed with delight that lordly palace, in the company of Krishna spake these words: *Oh you of mighty arms! Oh you whose mother is Devaki!* when the battle was about to commence, I became aware of your greatness and that celestial form of yours. But that, O Keshava! which through affection (for me) you explained before, has all disappeared, *O lion amongst men!* from my degenerate mind. Again and again, however, I feel a curiosity about those topics. But now, O

Madhava! you will be going at no distant date to Dwarka.

**Vasudeva said—**

*From me, O son of Pritha you heard a mystery and learnt about the eternal piety in form and about all the everlasting worlds* (9)

*It is excessively disagreeable to me that you should not have grasped it through want of intelligence. And the recollection (of it) now again is not possible to me.* (10)

*Really, Oh son of Pandu, you are devoid of faith and of a bad intellect. O Dhananjaya, it is not possible for me to repeat in full what I said before* (11)

*For that doctrine was perfectly adequate for understanding the seat of the Brahman. It is not possible for me to state it in full in that way.* (12)

*For then accompanied by my Yogic (mystic) power I declared to you the Supreme Brahman. But I shall relate an ancient story upon that subject.\** (13)

### Avatara

In popular belief Krishna is regarded as an incarnation of the Deity. But Arjun's surprise, indicated by his question, would seem to show that he at any rate was not up to that moment aware of his divine nature. Strong color is lent to it by Arjun's great distress indicated in shlokas 41 and 42 of Chapter XI, wherein he reviewing his whole conduct in the past due to his mistaken notion that he was dealing with a human being seeks forgiveness:

\*Sacred. Bks. of the East. Vol. 8, p. 230, 2nd Ed. .

*Regarding thee as a friend, whatever has been inadvertently said. Like O Krishna, Oh Yadav, Oh friend,*

*Not knowing this thy Majesty, whether in ignorance or affection,* (41)

*And however insulted in fun while at play, sleeping, sitting or eating,*

*O Changeless, or in company, for that I crave forgiveness from thee, O Inconceivable* (42)

Similarly Arjun's breakdown on the field of battle points to his ignorance of this aspect of Krishna's life. Krishna had himself advised war and was on the scene as his charioteer sure of victory. Yet with God, by his side he is despondent about victory. He is deluded as to slaughter of kin, though God is its instigator. With God in person in control of the situation he is worried about preservation of family and its traditions.

The line of argument adopted by Arjun in shlokas 30 onwards in Chapter I, to justify his conduct in Krishna's eyes, would appear ludicrous if Arjun did not in fact believe that he was addressing a human being. It would suggest that Arjun was a hopeless atheist a caviller, as he would not rely for victory upon his Divine companion and yet Krishna gives him a certificate that he was a non-caviller, a friend and a devotee deserving his assistance. And Arjun too appeals to Krishna with childlike simplicity and earnestness to point the way out of the impassé, "do teach me, I am thy disciple." There is an attitude of profound respect undeniably but no indication that he treated him God Almighty. When Krishna pulls him up in Shs. 2 and 3

of Chap. II he successfully resists the attempt and gives his reasons in Shlokas 4, 5, 6 for not obeying him. This is strange attitude in a frail mortal face to face with his Maker.

Krishna's attitude towards war was known beforehand. But still advice is sought in Shloka 7 not in the form of a command, but moral and intellectual conviction of the propriety of war, as is apparent from the fact that during the course of development of the teaching, several attempts at rousing him to arms failed. Terrible grief is felt in Shloka 8, yet the Supreme is not able to remove it till the last. Not only presence but even profound reasoning and persuasion prove ineffective (*Vide* Ch.II—18, 37, 38; III—30; IV—42; VIII—7; XI—34; XVIII—59, 60).

In Chapter X, Shlokas 12—14\* Arjun after listening to the teaching addressed in the first person, and understanding Krishna to mean that he was identical with God gives expression to it, and says that Rishis including the author of the Gita himself have sung of the attributes of the manifest Brahman immanent in all, and assures Krishna that inasmuch as he appropriates the same attributes to himself he believes it all and wants further light and also personal experience. This also seems to indicate that knowledge of this aspect of

#### \*Arjun said—

*You are Supreme Brahman, Supreme God, Supremely pure. Eternal Divine Self, Primal, Unborn and all-pervading God, (12)*

*Have you been called by the sages, Devarishi Narad, Asit, Deval and Vyas, you also say the same to me. (13)*

*All this I regard as true what ye tell me. O Keshav. Your form know neither the gods nor demons. (14)*

Krishna came to him as a surprise for the first time, and was so extraordinary that he found it necessary to assure Krishna that he believed it all, and took Krishna at his word.

Yet strange to say, even after this, coupled with a visible demonstration of his Universal Form, and a further assurance of victory in Shlokas 33 and 34† of Ch. XI, Arjun remained unmoved, when at last he completed his teaching in Ch. XVIII, 64, and left him to ponder over the matter and act accordingly. Even then not feeling assured he gave the final lift in Shlokas 65 and 66 of Ch. XVIII to finally prevent him from sticking to his resolve, which indicates Arjun's indecision up to the very end of his teaching.

Circumstances *ante bellum* also indicate that Arjun a life-long friend, a companion and a close relation—he was Krishna's brother-in-law—shared this ignorance with his brother princes, in fact, all.

1. When Krishna killed Kans, the tyrant ruler of Muttra, to save the people from his oppression, for which purpose he is supposed to have incarnated, King Jarasindh of Magadh, father-in-law of Kans, dared threat of an expedition against Krishna. And the threat was effective as it induced Krishna to advise migration of his clan from Muttra to far off Dwarka.

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†So get up and win fame, and vanquishing the enemy enjoy prosperous kingdom. They have been already killed by me. Be thou just the pretext, O Left-handed-arrow-shooter. (33)

Drona, Bhishm, Jayadrath, Karan and other valiant warriors, Kill them, already killed by me, don't tremble, fight, you will vanquish the enemy in battle. (34)

2. On the occasion of the great Rajasuya Sacrifice the senior Kuru Bhishma on the ground of Krishna's profound knowledge of the Vedas and unexampled bravery and skill in the art of war proposed him for the seat of honour (President). But the proposal was vehemently opposed in full assembly by Krishna's rival King Shishupal backed by a powerful party of crowned heads on the ground that he was not a reigning prince. The point worthy of note is that the veteran Bhishma in recounting his merits did not treat him as Divinity incarnate at all, and the assembled guests by their attitude did not give an indication that they treated him so, else their objection would have been met by a very effective answer, that as an incarnation of Deity he was certainly superior to an anointed head. True, Krishna killed Shishupal then and there. But this incident was not meant and does not appear to have led people to believe in Krishna's Divinity, as immediately after Duryodhan planned and successfully managed to satisfy his grudge against the Pandavas by taking their kingdom, insulting Draupadi and throwing them into the torments of an exile for twelve years.

3. Duryodhan aware of Arjun's close relation and friendship with Krishna, brazen-facedly went back upon his vow and refused to restore the kingdom to the Pandavas even after fulfilment of the conditions by them. Nay, he secured alliances against them amongst brother princes who had no personal interest in the defeat of the Pandava brothers.

4. Krishna's mission of peace to Hastinapur, before battle, failed. Nay, Duryodhan planned his arrest while there. He did so because he was conscious of

his invincibility. But who dare oppose the Supreme by show of force?

5. If Duryodhan was so defiant, Bhishma, Drona, Krip, Ashwatthama and other veteran generals were no better. They too unmindful of their future were ready to come to deadly encounter with the Supreme, arrow and bow in hand out of regard for a misguided prince, in support of an unrighteous cause. The reason of regard was pure self-interest, a temporary, fleeting gain, ceasing as this aged mortal coil was shuffled off.

Arjun's conduct *post bellum*, and mode of address (*vide* p. 188) appears strange and does not quite fit in with the popular belief in Krishna's Divinity specially in view of Shs. 41 and 42 of Ch. XI.

Coming to the mode of delivery of the teaching itself, it is noticeable that it is not dogmatic and couched in language of command, but reasoned, cautious and persuasive. It allows full freedom to Arjun to weigh all pros and cons and then make his choice. True it discloses a keenness that Arjun may choose the course so dear to Krishna's heart but there is pure appeal to reason, no force or pressure is employed and neither friendship, nor divine might is pressed into service to determine his conduct. This is strange having regard to the circumstances and the immediate necessity of joining battle with the Kurus.

Then again Krishna says that he serves as a model of conduct for man. Now how could frail man look upon the Supreme as a model to follow. There is nothing common between the two because of the absolute power and purity of the one and frailty, helplessness and

impurity of the other. Only one who has passed through the mill himself can note obstacles in the path and point the way out to overcome them. The words, and conduct of an experienced and tried veteran always carry weight and not of one who knows not the pangs of hunger or the surging tides of appetite and passion—fundamentals of mortal existence, forces which keep man swamped in misery and refuse to give him respite to draw within and know himself.

As regards the use of the first person singular, it is manifest that Krishna could not interpret the all-pervading Self to be the same and no more than the self in him confined within a small human frame. At the very time when he was teaching him that the physical and mental world was pervaded by Him he meant Arjun to understand that the Supreme Self or the *I* referred to by him was not to be taken to be the one chained within his frame and nought without. Obviously then the Supreme Self within the four corners of the Krishna-frame was but the minutest possible fraction of the Self pervading the whole Cosmos, the Krishna-casement was but a dot, on the huge horizon. And about this fraction, which confines himself within a human frame Krishna himself says in Chapter XV, Sh. 7:

*A particle of mine in this world of beings becoming the eternal self, attracts, including the mind the six senses residing in nature.*

**Question**—Then why did Krishna identify himself with the Supreme Self?

**Answer**—Because he was an illumined Soul, and was by his Yogic power acting with God-consciousness



at the time (An. Gita, Ch. I, Sh. 13. P. 189 *supra*). He teaches in Shs. 8 and 9 Chap. V:

*"I do nothing considers a self-abiding knower of truth while seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing, speaking, giving, holding, opening and closing the eyes. "The senses rove amongst their objects so doth he hold."*

As regards the activity of the senses, he teaches in the same Chapter in Shloka 13—

*Neither activity nor agency does the self create for the world, nor union of action to fruit. Nature however revolveth.*

Again in Chap. III, Shs. 27 and 28—

*"By the qualities of nature are all actions performed. The ego-blinded self imagineth "I am the door." A knower, O Mighty-armed, of the real nature of the division of qualities and functions, the qualities (senses, mind, reason) rove in qualities (sense-objects), knowing so remains unattached."*

How does this constant interchange go on?

*"From food grow up beings, from rain springs forth food. From sacrifice (cosmic activity) pours forth rain and sacrifice is action-born. Action know ye Brahman created. Brahma abides in the imperishable. So the all-pervading Brahman over cosmic activity ever presides" (Ch. III—Shs. 14 and 15).*

Krishna's attitude as an illumined Self was the one described in Sh. 24 of Chapter IV.

*God the act of offering (of) God the oblation, with God the ladle in God the fire. They attain God who ever*

*contemplate upon the activity of God in this form, namely, God (within man) dedicates sense-activity with his body in cosmic activity.*

Krishna in using the first person singular illustrated in himself this *profoundly mystic* teaching and let God in him speak. He had given up the idea of agency in action and attributed his speech to its ultimate source—the Supreme Self.

Therefore *I* does not stand for Krishna encased in a human frame but the Supreme Eternal who was at the time operating a human form, called Krishna. Its inner counterpart the Self (Krishna) was abiding within in this knowledge—

*All actions by the mind renouncing, the restrained embodied dwells at ease, in the nine-gated city, neither acting nor causing to act (Ch. V, Sh. 13).*

The Supreme Self was really speaking hence very apt use of the first person singular. In fact if Krishna had done otherwise, he would have been called a not-knower (Sh. 29, Ch. III) and would have belied the teaching in Ch. V, Shs. 9-10 in his own case, at the very moment of delivery, a thing which he condemns in unambiguous language in Ch. III, Sh. 26.

On this question Krishna according to what he teaches in the Gita allows us to go no further than this:—

1. That he was at the time acting with God-consciousness by his mighty Yogic power.

2. That when he was in that state, it was proper to predicate of him that so long as *that state of con-*

*sciousness lasted* he incarnated the Supreme in his body, as it was actually operated at the time by Him.

3. That when this expanded consciousness was no more in the human frame of Krishna as on the occasion of Arjun's request to him to repeat the Gita teaching after the war was over, but he possessed the ordinary normal consciousness, and was acting with his ego mentality then it could not be predicated of him that his frame incarnated the Supreme.

4. That what entitles a human body to be called the frame of the incarnated Supreme, is not the physical frame of a particular man as it is during the whole of life's sojourn, but expanded consciousness of the individual therein when the idea of agency has been obliterated altogether and the Supreme assumes sole charge of its operation.

5. That this state is attainable by one who would follow the teaching laid down in the Gita.

Avatarhood is a state of consciousness in a body and not existence in space of the frame of a particular individual as such.

*In other words it is the state of a man during the time that he, giving up all idea of agency in action attributes it to God not in theory but in actual fact. He during that interval rises above the qualities of nature and becomes the true ruler of Nature, its Ishwar or Lord.*

If the use of the *I* is understood in this dual sense of *I* as Krishna (man) and the Supreme (operating the Krishna frame) according to context in studying the Gita, then this glorious teaching loses all its ambiguity and bewilderment for even the most exacting devotees of reason.

The same person is *Avatar* at one moment and normal man at another.

### Why I Come

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदाऽऽत्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥७॥

*Whenever there is decay of Dharma, O Bharat,  
And growth of Adharma, then a body-form  
I\* take 7*

**Dharma**—That which sustains and holds together.

When men in their blind folly disregard the basic principle by which this Universe is sustained and held together, in their pursuits and pinning faith in ignorant self-regarding activity elevate it to a place of exaltation, then Krishna (a perfect being, a Yogi) out of love for mankind assumes a human form.†

\*Krishna uses the word I here to denote himself and not the Supreme. The Supreme has not been designated by the I uniformly throughout the Gita, e.g.,

Chap. III.	Sh. 10. Prajapati (Creator)	
	Shs. 14 and 15.	Brahman
Chap. IV.	Sh. 24.	Do.
Chap. V.	Shs. 9, 19 and 24.	Do.
Chap. VI.	Shs. 27 and 28.	Do.
Chap. VIII.	Shs. 3, 8, 9, 10, 21.	Do.
Chap. XIII.	Shs. 12, 15 and 31.	Do.
Chap. XV.	Sh. 17.	Do.
Chap. XVIII	Shs. 61 and 62.	Ishwar (Lord)

†Then as the wheel of time rolled further onwards, and deeper degeneracy came and men began to step beyond the bounds set for them and gave way more and more to greed and lust, inclemencies

What is this basic principle (Dharma) which sustains the Universe?

It is the principle of *co-operative activity, of mutual service, of dedicated action* as enunciated in Chap. III—10-13. It keeps the complicated mechanism of the Universe, so delicately adjusted by the Supreme, in working order. Each part functions in its own limited sphere in the interest of the whole.

On the analogy of the activity of non-sentient objects and forces, like the Sun, Moon, Air, Water, Fire, etc., and also that of non-rational creatures, human action *should be performed as duty, as man's individual dedicated offering in the Eternal Sacrifice (Universe) of the Supreme, leaving satiation of his wants in charge of the Beneficent Creator who is revolving this wheel for the good of all life.*

of weather, sufferings from heat and cold, rivalry and wars and the subjection of man to man and the artifice of wealth and property, with its inseparable consequence of poverty came on them and distinctions of rich and poor arose and penal laws and punishment followed and sovereigns found it more and more impossible to rule their peoples without engaging in wars with other monarchs. And great despondency and weariness came on these Kings and they were likely to fail in their *great work of government.* Then we the Rishis appointed for this purpose, first unfolded unto them *these stores of knowledge, teaching them to understand the nature and the end of all creation and see their duties and discharge them with the clear eye and strong heart of true insight.* And for the science was given to kings, it has come down under the name of Raj-vidya, Raj-Guhya, Science of Kings, King of Science, the Royal Secret Doctrine. (Ch. II, Yoga Vashishth—Mystic Experiences, Bhagwandass). e

### What do I come for?

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगेयुगे ॥८॥

*For the protection of the good and destruction  
of the evil-doers*

*For the enthronement of true Dharma, I manifest  
from age to age. 8*

**Sadhus** (the good)—Those who utilise their bodies in the service of all, whose action is not motivated by regard for self, but is dedicated to the Supreme in the interest of world harmony (*Loksangrah*).

**Dushkritam** (evil-doers)—The breakers of the law of mutual service and co-operation. They live for the body only. Sensual enjoyments, and worldly possessions become their sole end of existence. Life of sense usurps their personality. Life of reflection and stable-mindedness yields place to excited living. Appropriation of material goods is achieved by resort to violent and dishonest means, leaving a trail of misery and unhappiness in the dispossessed. There is display of material wealth which causes heart-burning and creates discontent amongst the masses. Virtue and fair dealing appears to be a disadvantage and fraud, overreaching and artful dealing an advantage. Sincerity yields place to speciousness. Moral values are reversed, attention to the external world alone, produces darkness within. A small group usurps power and command of material resources and retains them by a policy of deliberate suppression of personality of the weaker parties. Mu-

tuality is replaced by antagonism. The whole is made to exist for the part. The body-casement assumes a false value. The Self becomes the groom (*syce*) and not the lord (*rais*) of his chariot (body). Ambition (*Rajas*) untampered by *Satva* (balanced purity) assuming dominion rules submerged humanity (*Tames*) engaged in an interminable struggle to keep body and soul together, but otherwise dead to things that matter, things which alone can bring true happiness. Usage, lifeless ritual, and false doctrines carefully fostered in the mind by design, usurp the function of reason. They are hugged to bosom by the unwary unfortunates as priceless possessions, dearer than life itself and under cover of these power and ambition exploit them for their mundane purposes.

This wickedness has got to be uprooted by calling people to a sense of reality, to the nature of the divine Cycle and their place therein, *through a clarion call to mutual service and a life of self-control and poise of being, finding true joy in self-knowledge as a living reality.*

*Dharma:—*

1. That the self is eternal, indestructible and the body transient.

2. That body should be completely brought under the dominion of the Self, for selfless dedicated action in the interest of world harmony, by cultivation of equanimity through sense-control.

3. That this Universe is the creation of a Beneficent Providence for the good of all life and so our individual needs, need not bother us. Our concern is

simply to fulfil the task we are fitted for by training and temperament for the good of all.

• 4. That man (Self) should look for true joy not in sense objects which but minister to his casement only but in abiding in the Supreme within, the wondrous Architect of this elusive and fascinating Universe.

Propagation of these doctrines as live guides to human conduct is establishment of true Dharma. This is so supreme a good and so essential that even perfect beings, the liberated, who have no cravings left to work for, assume material form to restore it. No doubt, they have to resort to methods, in fulfilment of their mission on earth, which to ordinary eyes appear to be violent and destructive. The deluded folk disapprove of them as they are contrary to their conventional modes of morality or easily disturbed humane feelings. But they do it as a matter of necessity without any ill-will in the permanent interest of the unfortunate victims who have brought about chaos by their folly. It is only incidental to the process of reshaping society. The whole plan is inspired by supreme love for all. The erring part is adjusted back to its true place in the whole and required to play its proper role for the good of all.

Such selfless service for world harmony is therefore the highest virtue and such mentality saves a man from the bondage of action. Action resulting therefrom is naturally without any idea of self and in the interest of all.



### Ideal Existence

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥६॥

*This heavenly birth and action mine, who comprehends in its essence  
On shedding off the body, is not reborn, but  
comes to me, O Arjun. 9*

Who therefore understands the inner meaning of why I assume a body form, i.e., that it is necessitated because of a progressive disregard of the basic principle of the Universe; who understands the purpose of my visit in a body form, viz., to bring man to a sense of reality, that he may engage in selfless service for all as an offering to attain his ultimate goal of liberation, and who realising this engages in selfless activity and self-illuminated devotes his life to propagation of the above doctrines with unremitting effort by example and precept, is not reborn after he sheds off this body. His attachment to sense objects, and changing phenomena of the Universe is destroyed by this selfless activity in the cause of righteousness. Such a one lives in the world for the world and is therefore its dominus. Formerly he lived in the body for the body and therefore owned that alone. Living for the world so expands him as to make him possess God-consciousness, how will he then remain chained to this mortal plane?

In this shloka Krishna quite definitely and categorically lays down man's ideal of existence on this mortal plane.

It is not to be supposed for a moment that other men cannot attain Krishna's state by effort.

### Modes of Attainment

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ १० ॥

*Freed from attachment, fear and anger, mind  
absorbed in Me, refuged in Me  
Purified in the fire of knowledge, have many  
attained My state. 10*

Krishna here refers to the three Yogas of Knowledge (*Sankhya*), Action (*Karma*), and Devotion (*Bhakti*).

*Attachment*—When man realises the beneficent nature of the Universe cycle, he ceases to trouble about body needs, and acts for the sake of his Maker. Attachment to sense-objects ceases.

*Fear*—When he realises that he is constant, indestructible and eternal, and that change is simply a property of the body, then he attains mastery over the body affections and becomes fearless.

*Anger*—is always aroused when there is resistance to fulfilment of some craving, to something we have set our heart upon. But when there is a realisation of the basic principle of mutual co-operation and service, apparent resistance is interpreted differently and there is no occasion left for anger.

The way to attain Krishna (*bhava*) state of being is, therefore, to act in accordance with the true doctrines propounded above.

Various modes of commencing the process of development are indicated here leading to the ultimate goal. During his onward march man develops all the three components of his personality, feeling (devotion), cognition (knowledge), and will (action), and finally attains the state of a *gunateet* (gone beyond nature). Then he is liberated from the bondage of nature and becomes its Lord.

### Path of Liberation

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

मम कर्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ ११ ॥

*In whatever way they take to me in that I welcome them.*

*My path, men tread at last, O Partha, however they commence. 11*

Whether people start with knowledge (Gyan), Action (Karma) or Devotion, or Meditation (Upasna), according to their physical and mental make-up, as they proceed on under proper guidance, they acquire proficiency in all, until, by gradual training and practice, theoretical knowledge of the self, the world, and the Divine, in a self-controlled body, becomes realised experience and they begin to act for world harmony. Their body activity is directed solely to usher in the reign of righteousness on this mortal plane and they on body-dissolution attain the Supreme state.

The popular interpretation that everything man does good, bad or indifferent is in the path of the Lord, appears to be unconvincing. If all is the path of the

Lord, where is the necessity of a model, as taught in Chap. III-23.

### Path of Bondage

कांक्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।

. क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥ १२ ॥

*Those desiring fruit of action here (other) gods  
they serve.*

*Action-born fruit is attained soon in this world  
of men. 12*

Those who desire worldly prosperity, or are keen on scientific discovery or invention or improvement in Arts serve the elements. They study the phenomena of the manifested Universe, the properties of things and forces in operation, their laws of action and manipulate them for the production of desirable objects. They deny themselves comfort and rest to discover the properties of minerals, plants, soils, etc. This they achieve by offering their actions as sacrifice to these objects, as it were, to gain the result aimed at.\*

\*About the time when Krishna was preaching considerable success had been made in the Arts and Sciences. We have descriptions of most wonderful buildings in the Mahabharat. In fact a building played a prominent part as a contributory to the cause which ultimately led to the Mahabharat catastrophe. Medicine, astronomy, mathematics, agriculture, etc., had all developed. Different forms of wealth had come into existence. This had been done by patient research and hard work by a host of men. They devoted themselves to the study of the sun, stars, the earth, water, heat, air, etc., to unfathom their secrets. No serious man could maintain for a moment, least of all a Perfect Man or whom people later became inclined to call God Incarnate that all

## Motive the Test

These paths however are not to be taken to mean, that there is division of activities as such, leading to consequences so dissimilar, namely, that some activities lead necessarily to liberation and others to bondage, and that it is possible to divide human activities in their manifested form as *liberating* or *chaining*. For, satisfaction of wants of sentient life is the main purpose and *raison d'être of the activity of elements in their manifold forms and they have to be worked by men, to bring about such changes of form in them as might result in the preservation of life in a state of happiness and plenty.*

this achievement was made by offering butter and *til* oblations in the sacred fire.

Yajna here has the same meaning as in Chap. III, Shs. 9-16. The reference here as the context shows is to activities in which there is a deep attachment to objects of sense as if their attainment was the end of mortal existence, the sole purpose of man's journey on earth in contrast to those mentioned in Shloka 11.

The orthodox interpretation of a butter sacrifice to gods to fathom the mysteries of Nature or attain worldly ends is untenable on the face of it, for if really true then Arjun could easily have adopted Krishna's argument and serve both purposes by performing a sacrifice, i.e., avoid slaughter of kin and gain kingdom. He would have simply cried with joy at the way out of the impassé, who more competent than the Almighty Incarnate to suggest a proper sacrifice to the gods for attainment of the objects—kingdom, etc.

If it is replied that Arjun's aim was salvation for himself, hence the necessity of teaching the true import of Vedic Sacrifice, then a critical analysis of Ch. I, Shs. 38-45 and Ch. II, Shs. 4-9 negatives such suggestion as it shows that his aim was to avoid the sin of destroying family and preceptors. There was not the re-

Diversity of function is inherent in this complicated mechanism called Universe. However function matters not but the motive.

### Form of Activity no Test

चातुर्वर्ग्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

*The four classes have I created by the division of  
qualities and functions (duties),  
Their Creator know Me thou, though I am ac-  
tionless and the changeless. 13*

This world is the creation of God, the activity therein is God's. The world is composite, yet organic, it is maintained by the activity of its component parts. Humanity for its maintenance, needs knowledge of the working principles of this Universe, protection against motest idea in his mind of any salvation or *Moksha* as such, why "My mind is whirling" he was hardly in his senses to think of salvation, he had despaired of life itself, "what is enjoyment aye!) life itself." His prayer to Krishna in Ch. II, Sh. 7 is not to point out the way to salvation, but to tell him convincingly what response he should make to the situation, how he should act. If by avoiding battle, he could secure the kingdom, the aim of Krishna's mission of peace to Hastinapur, he would have thoroughly enjoyed himself in the world like any noble-hearted and virtuous mortal, with Krishna's approval. In fact his conduct *post bellum* annihilates the assumption. For Arjun did take to enjoyment after victory and also forgot the teaching altogether. (vide p. 188). Such conduct in a seeker of liberation is most inexplicable. And even in the request to repeat the teaching there is a display of curiosity only, not the ardent burning desire of a god mad soul to know the forgotten path again.

the rebellion of its parts, materials for its sustenance and also service to keep it going. *In man, are the head, hands, stomach and feet. In society are the learned, the warrior, the merchant and the labourer.* Neglecting which part could the body be sustained for any length of time in an efficient state. *Pari passu neglecting which element, could society exist in a healthy state for long? How could there be harmony if one part is diseased or neglected? Dissolution, decay or sudden upheaval is certain to take place.* The activities of all in all directions are necessary and therefore good.

The difference lies not in the activities at all, but in the motive. If the motive is not *Lokasangrah* or the action is not dedicated to the Supreme as our contribution to the activity which results in the satisfaction of all material, mental, and spiritual wants, but proceeds from a self-regarding motive in ignorance of one's true place in the Cycle and in utter disregard of consequences to society then it does not lead to liberation. Such an actor does not tread Krishna's path of liberation, but the usual course of birth and death cycle involved in acting fascinated by the sense-world. If the motive of activity whatever its nature is world harmony, then it leads to the Path.

Arjun, there is none superior or inferior because of his caste label as you seem to think. You imagine, that to be a better man, you have to be a Brahmin and perform the functions of his order, which you deem better than yours. But that is not so, as you see in my case. I am a Kashatriya, and not a born Brahmin, yet—

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।

इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बद्धयते ॥ १४ ॥

*Actions affect me not, nor have I relish for fruit  
of action.*

*He who knows Me thus is not fettered by action. 14*

Knowing that motive behind the activity counts, man should perform action from a selfless motive for *Lokasangrah*, as his offering in the Eternal Sacrifice. Here the teaching makes it clear, that functional division is necessary for harmony and preservation of humanity and is natural. But the parts have no *a priori* merit attached to them. They have to fill their assigned roles and are mutually interdependent, each indispensable for the rest. Real merit consists in making the activity selfless, i.e., service by whomsoever performed guided by true knowledge, which is meritorious and makes man a useful and respected member of society. It does not depend upon birth, much less on wealth, which is with man only as a trustee for all and not for his personal revelry.

This teaching is a death-blow to distinctions of birth and wealth, i.e., arbitrary, social and monetary cleavages.

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥ १५ ॥

*So understanding former aspirants for liberation  
performed action.*

*Perform action also thou, as did aspirants, in days  
of yore. 15*



Your duty is to fight, if you engage in it without attachment for preservation of world harmony and establishment of righteousness, then even though you kill the Kurus and food-bought Gurus (Preceptors) you would not be committing sin, like myself who verily has taken birth for this very purpose. Do not worry about the functions of a Brahmin which appear pleasant to you, as an escape from this tangle in which you find yourself. A Brahmin performing his functions with a selfish motive would be equally condemnable. The ancients did not behave in this manner.

The misconception of commentators that Arjun was a "*Mumukshu*" has arisen perhaps out of this shloka. But it is obvious that Krishna does not use the word for him at all, but only cites the example of former aspirants, as additional argument for performance of action since he is using all materials available to him to induce Arjun to fight. He is not using Arjun's mental break-down as a pretext to preach the "Path of Salvation to Humanity," through him. For then his constant exhortations "stand up and fight" from the very commencement of his teaching would be reduced to a practical joke. Not until XVIII—66 when the teaching was complete would he be justified, in distracting Arjun's attention by pulling his leg from time to time. If he did so, he was taking a great risk, as, if Arjun accepting his advice had begun the game, then the teaching would have remained incomplete and the whole object of the incarnation frustrated.

### The Lord's Path

Action without attachment regardless of a fruit, in

the interest of world harmony or preservation of Dharma.

All non-sentient forces are acting thus. No one accuses them of partiality or comments that their action is not beneficial. There is no departure by a hair's breadth from the appointed course. There is perfect maintenance of the world cycle.

No one accuses God of partiality. All call Him merciful. All call Him just, all-powerful, all-knowing, ever watchful, all-owner. All call Him the Supreme Director of Nature.

All operation is uniform under His direction. This uniformity affects all equally.

True path is necessarily good as it aims at perfection for all.

Every one has the means equally provided without favour or frown. But the utilisation of these is in the individual's own hand. He has freedom to adopt either course, attachment to Me or the World. Man's freedom cannot be interfered with, he being of the same nature as God. It is inherent in the Self. If it were destroyed there would be no need left to improve or do anything, his activity would become mechanical.

Man may impose fetters on himself, if he so desires—and he does—but even in chaining himself in bondage, he is exercising his freedom. His own free will keeps him so chained, and by exercise of the same he can also escape from bondage. For no one can take away his freedom to train up his body, senses, mind, and reason, to act in obedience to himself, nor his capacity to know the eternal verities and his goal. Everything is there, he

has only to concentrate his attention within and the veil would be lifted. But no one can compel him to do so. He is free even there. If he has allowed himself to be ruled by others, which keeps his attention fixed in externals that too is his free act. Unless he willed it so, he could not be compelled. However great the oppression, however great the injustice, unless the thing appears to his understanding as on the whole good under the circumstances, he will not adopt it. He always chooses between alternatives and the choice is governed by the state of his knowledge, his life aims and the extent of his mastery over his body instrument.

Action in which there is attachment and desire for fruit is all for the body instrument as an end in itself, for if it were treated as only a means then the folly of attachment would not arise. In the case of our car or carriage we never feel much concerned or troubled if we are not able to get repair materials of a particular description or from a particular shop, or at a particular time. We always satisfy the want somehow without being wedded to particular modes. There is no attachment to the things as something governing activity itself. If we felt the same detachment for the body needs that we feel for the requirements of our car, our attitude towards the world would change.

However we are perfectly free in action. If the attainment of worldly objects is the primary end then our efforts are mainly directed to secure them. If attainment of God is the primary aim, then whatever our outer activity may be, the primary consideration therein will not be personal needs of the body, but the good of

all including ourselves. The first alternative, the following of pursuits for the body is not according to nature and leads to conflict as we see in the world today. The net result of activities which are blind (body being treated as an end in itself, and the self and true end of life neglected) and determined by ignorance which is of all grades, is a great chaos, in which there is great inequality, injustice and denial of opportunity for self-expression to man. The difference produces a sense of misery and pain which is resented and attributed to selfishness of the more fortunate. Ineffective remedies are employed for a better distribution of food, clothing, and other needs of the body-instrument.

In the other alternative, however, there will be absolute and perfect harmony and apparent departures would adjust themselves automatically. The wants of each would be met, for all are working to that end. No man's wants can be so great that the whole world may not succeed in meeting them. In this path, the world looks after the man and the man lives for the world. There is only one right, the right of the world to work for man and *vice versa*. Man apart from the world cycle has no meaning. He cannot exist. The world is liable to serve him, only if he is useful for it and this usefulness is determined for him by the world. There is no right inherent in him to claim anything from the world except in return for some service which is his contribution to its maintenance. Similarly the world has no meaning at all if man cannot exist in it, i.e., he cannot fulfil his purpose. He cannot possibly be hurled out of the cycle. Changing of bodies through death and birth is no solution. *The solution lies in pro-*

*vision of all materials which are necessary to enable the body instrument to serve its dominus, the Self. Food and knowledge are the prime requisites of man for satiation of his physical and mental wants. A healthy environment is necessary for his moral and spiritual growth. For if society provides a bad environment, then it is denying him the right to render it useful service. There should be no favouritism in society for individuals or classes; it should only live for itself, that is to say, its movement should be absolutely harmonious for all in fulfilment of the Divine purpose. Every member being eternal, is an end in himself and society exists for him. No one can be neglected for the sake of others. All are equal, nay, same in essence. All are entitled to attain Krishna-state which is the aim, for which society exists and for which this cycle moves.*

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोप्यत्र मोहिताः ।

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽशुभात् ॥ १६ ॥

*What is action? What non-action? Even the knowing are herein puzzled.*

*Nature of action shall I explain, knowing it you'll be saved from evil.*

16

### Varieties of Action

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥ १७ ॥

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।

स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ १८ ॥

*It is necessary to know the nature of action, as  
 well as that of forbidden action,  
 • Necessary also to know the nature of non-action,  
 mysterious is the path of action. 17*

*Who sees non-action in action and action in non-  
 action,*

*He is of right Reason.*

*Self-abiding, and expert doer of all actions. 18*

*Karma or Action* is body activity, supplying its quota to the total activity for the satisfaction of its needs.

*Akarma*—Soul-state, when the Self as spectator watches the activity of the body-engine as part of the total for fulfilment of the Divine plan.

*Vikarma*—Forbidden action.

*Non-action has two aspects—*

1. Action dedicated to God, without the actor mentality.

2. Action in which there is no desire for fruit, but there is actor mentality.

In (1) the mind merges in the Supreme as its refuge, in (2) mind is unattached to the result but is attached to the activity itself.

He who knows that the body-engine acts so long as he is within, that its activity presents to him situations for his attention and decision and consequent alteration in the same, treats body-activity as his action, and sees action in non-action. When he treats the activity as if it were for him, he has action-mentality and when

he treats of it as God ordained and for God, he being just a spectator, he has "non-action" mentality. Activity being there it is a question of looking at it from two opposite aspects, actor or spectator.

NOTE.—Krishna's mentality in the Gita shows the absence of Actor-aspect. I in the teaching stands for the Creator in most places.

The two aspects are more or less like the Nirguna and Saguna aspects of God. The pure self is "inconceivable, measureless and formless", like the Nirguna Brahman, but the embodied self permeates the body and presides over every activity, like the Saguna Brahman immanent in everything and behind all activity. Man is microcosm in the macrocosm.

### What is Non-action

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः . कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः ।

ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥ १६ ॥

*Whose all commencements are not motivated by  
mental affections,*

*Whose actions are tempered in knowledge-fire,  
him the knowing call a sage. 19*

He who commences action not urged by a desire for gain to self or loss to another preceded by mental planning, knowing that results depend upon the co-operative activity of numerous outside factors along with his own, which he does not control, is a sage.

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासंगं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥२०॥

*Clinging to fruit of action given up, ever  
satiated, independent,  
Even when engaged in action, he really does  
nought. 20*

He who acts unmindful of the gain which is ordinarily associated as resulting from particular actions, is always satiated because of his faith in the beneficent purpose of the Divine Cycle, is independent, and conscious of the pure self being without wants is really not acting though engaged in action nominally, because his activity is in response to divine fulfilment and not to body needs.

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।

शरीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥२१॥

*Hoping for naught, with mind and self  
controlled, without sense of personal possession,  
Acting with the body he does not incur sin. 21*

Indifferent to what gain is to accrue from his action, mind and ego under restraint, without any feeling of dominion or ownership in things which happen to be in his possession and over which he has a power of disposal and enjoyment, (knowing unlike the rest, that his relation therewith is temporary and for the sake of body only, that if in excess of his immediate needs they are really for the use of those in need and that he is a mere custodian thereof,) he lets his body machinery



move in the interest of world harmony. So acting he commits no sin.

यदृच्छालाभसन्तुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।

समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वाऽपि न निबध्यते ॥२२॥

*Content with unsought gain, above opposites,  
without envy poised in success or failure,  
Though acting, he remains unbound.* 22

As he does not commence action with a fruit-motive, therefore he feels quite happy and contented in whatever gain spontaneously accrues to him. Nor he is troubled by the dual affections of heat and cold, or pleasure and pain, while performing action, nor feels envious of anybody in relation to his activity, but is even and undisturbed, whether his action results in success or failure. Such a one though acting is not fettered (by action).

गतसंगस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥२३॥

*Of one attachment gone, freed, with mind  
centred in knowledge,  
Actions like unto offerings, the whole activity  
is dissolved (in the beneficent activity of the*

*Divine).* 23

In short all actions of a man who has renounced attachment to fruit, is illumined in the knowledge of his true Self and knows his place in the beneficent divine cycle operated by God, which transforms his activity into an offering in the Eternal Sacrifice, lose their par-

ticularity in the perennial divine activity which is sustaining the Universe.

In the eyes of such a man this activity becomes a play of the Divine.

### The Highest State of Man, God-Consciousness

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणाहुतम् ।

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥२४॥

*God the act of offering, God the oblation is  
offered in God-fire;*

*Brahman verily is reached by them who meditate  
upon the activity of the Brahman. 24*

God (within him) dedicates his sense-activity with his body in cosmic activity.

This is the true view of human activity, all is God's the body, its functioning parts, their activity, and the outside Universe, which is the field of its activity and is itself ever active. Behind the entire visible activity is the Eternal Creative Energy, the Imperishable Brahman.

He who contemplates his activity thus, as Brahman-activity, attains the Supreme.

### Sacrifices for Attainment

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युप्रासते ।

ब्रह्मग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥२५॥

*Other Yogis perform sacrifice to Devas (for  
desire-fruition).*

*Others in God-fire perform sacrifice by pouring  
sacrifice. 25*

**Vedic Sacrifice**—(1) Some Yogis sacrifice to gods for satisfaction of desires.

**Selfless Sacrifice**—(2) Others sacrifice their egoism in the world activity by offering the activity of their senses, mind and reason for general welfare.

श्रोत्रादीन्निन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।

शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥२६॥

*Others offer their ear and other senses in the fire  
of restraint,*

*Others offer sound and other objects in the fire  
of the senses. 26*

**Sense control**—(3) Others gather their senses under the guidance of the Self and do not allow them to come in contact with objects (world).

**Mind control**—(4) Others while allowing their senses to rove in their objects, do not however allow the objects to influence them and retain a balanced calm in their midst.

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि क्षापरे ।

आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥२७॥

*Others, all functions of the senses as well as of  
vital breath,*

*Offer in the knowledge illumined fire of the  
Yoga of self-restraint. 27*

**Self-determination**—(5) Others establish the dominion of the Self over the entire body activity. They make the self a real owner of the chariot. All activity is self guided wholly uninfluenced by the urgent

demands of others for satisfaction. All their calls are burnt up in the fire of self-determination.

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथाऽपरे ।

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥२८॥

*Others sacrifices of wealth, austerity and Yoga, perform,*

*Aspirants of rigid vows perform, Scripture-study and knowledge sacrifices. 28*

**Charity**—(6) Others spend their wealth in charity.

**Austerity**—(7) Others bring the appetites under control by mortification of the body.

**Meditation**—(8) Others by meditation purify their mind and control its activity.

**Veda Study**—(9) Others withdrawing their mind devote it to Scripture study.

**Knowledge**—(10) Others devote themselves with determination to acquisition of knowledge.

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणोऽपानं तथाऽपरे ।

प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणः ॥२९॥

*Others perform sacrifice by offering incoming breath into the outgoing and vice versa,*

*Checking the flow of both, absorbed in control of vital breath (Prana). 29*

**Pranayam**—(11) Others control the restlessness of their mind by control of vital breath.

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।

सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः ॥ ३० ॥

*Others by limited diet offer breath into breath,  
All these are knowers of sacrifice their sins  
destroyed thereby. 30*

**Fasting**—(12) Others by rigid dieting control passions and appetites by weakening the function of the organs of action.

All these twelve classes of persons know the nature of Sacrifice (yajna), they have destroyed their sins by practising them.

Performance of these sacrifices leads to personal purification in speech, thought, and action and ultimately to absolute self-control and knowledge of the basic truths (Soul, Universe and the Supreme) as a living reality. When man reaches this state, he while acting outwardly gives up all idea of agency and attachment to fruit of action and rejoices in his own Self, satiated and independent. His whole activity is an offering in the Eternal Sacrifice for world harmony, and is meant primarily for the universe.

Such a man reaches the Supreme. One who is a slave to the body, without command over his senses, self blind, not knowing the universal activity to be God-ordained for the welfare of all, ignorant of his true place in the Universe-wheel, cannot be happy in this world, but will be like a straw floating without refuge on the changing ocean of sense-objects.

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।  
 नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य • कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥ ३१ ॥  
 एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा विततो ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।  
 कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥ ३२ ॥

*Who eat the life-giving leavings of Sacrifice  
 attain the Supreme eternal.  
 This world is not for the non-sacrificer, how  
 then the other, O best of the Kurus 31  
 Thus manifold varieties of Sacrifice are spread  
 at the mouth of Brahman,  
 Know ye their birth in action, knowing this  
 you will be freed from bondage. 32*

Manifold sacrifices have been prescribed, as effective means of gaining sense-control and self-knowledge. They are all a beneficent creation of God for our behoof. By practising them one can be freed from the bondage of action.

### Knowledge Sacrifice

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परंतप ।  
 सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ ३३ ॥

*Superior to wealth-sacrifice is  
 knowledge-sacrifice O Parantap,  
 All action in its entirety O Parth has its  
 consummation in knowledge. 33*

Of all Sacrifices mentioned before, knowledge sacrifice is the best. This is described in Sh. 24. In its theoretical aspect, in an untrained body, it cannot have

much influence except for barren disputation or feeding self-pride. But when a man illumined within, acts continually without attachment to fruit of action in the interest of world-harmony, by sense-control, then he develops self-abiding reason and attains the state described in Sh. 23. He gives up the idea of agency in action and treats it as the activity of the Divine within. He treats the body as an instrument to fulfil the will Divine. When he begins to live in this state then there is no such thing as action, left for him to do. Action in the body there is undoubtedly (III—5) but he no longer regards the body as his and therefore its action too as not his, it becomes God's. Arrival at this stage therefore is the termination of action for him. He has given charge of the body to some other agency and action henceforth though performed by the body is attributed to that agency. It is not a cessation of body-activity, but a change of operator. The meaning of this Shloka is brought out in Shlokas 23 and 24, which directly bear on this point.

The aim of all practice and knowledge is to grow man into this God-state (Sh. 24). All human action has this as its final aim. Until this stage is reached there is continuous striving to attain it by means of non-fruit regarding activity. When however it is reached then all striving stops, body activity becomes an expression of will Divine and no more an erring self-regarding human performance. His individual action is over then, it terminates in this state of realised knowledge.

*Gyan State* is a state of consciousness gradually unfolded, as a living reality by the constant performance

of selfless action. It is a state of existence in waking life made possible by training of the faculties, to conform in their action to the theoretical teaching which can be learnt as below.

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥३४॥

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।

येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥३५॥

*Learn this by humility (afore the teacher), by  
enquiry and by service.*

*The learned and the seers of essence will instruct  
thee in this knowledge. 34*

*Knowing this you will no longer remain deluded  
O Pandava,*

*By it you will see all beings in yourself and in  
Me. 35*

When one begins to live in this state, then beneath the diversity of external action he sees basic unity. He sees the self of each one which is regulating the body activity having properties similar to his own or Krishna's.

Whether as soul or as body there is permanent relation with the Universe.

**Body**—This is part of the same Nature (Prakriti), which builds the other bodies and so taken collectively, individual bodies are simply eddies in the ocean of matter and energy. The whole is really one. All eddies are in it as part of the whole. The part is in the whole and the whole manifests itself in the part. The self also



judging from external activity and its relation to the soul in our individual experience seems to be but an eddy in the ocean of consciousness, part in whole and the whole manifested in the part. For there can be no self-consciousness in the absence of other Selves. At the same time there is intimate connection in seeming separation. Everything in the ultimate appears to be endowed with consciousness however slight or undeveloped it be.

In Chap. 15, Sh. 7, the self is described as an eternal spark from the Divine mixing up with nature and assuming a body form. If this is the origin of embodied selves, then the Selves, in their purity apart from the body are in the same position to the Divine as body is to Nature, namely, rooted in One.

Just as he regards the activity of his body as a play of the Divine, he views the activity of all sentient life also as the same. This makes the activity of all as one divine activity in the ultimate, assuming seeming diversity. And so he in this state sees identity with all beings, and with Krishna.

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।

सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं संतरिष्यसि ॥३६॥

*Even if thou art, of all sinners, the most sinful,  
By (sitting in) this boat of knowledge, wilt*

*thou cross over all sin. 36*

By means of this, your agency mentality in action will be destroyed. You would not act for the Self but allow the body to act in the interest of world harmony as an instrument of the divine will. So when you are

no longer acting in the old sense, no question of sin arises. Because sin pre-supposes an agency mentality and action with desire for fruit.

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥३७॥

*As burning fire reduceth all fuel to ashes,*

*O Arjun,*

*Knowledge fire burneth all actions (to nothing)*

*in like manner. 37*

By destroying agency, wisdom fire destroys action in the old sense. Action tempered in this fire is now performed by the body as God ordained. He has got hold of the body-engine. The self is just the spectator of this divine activity within and without.

### Yoga Essential for Realisation

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥३८॥

*Than knowledge, no doubt, there is nothing*

*purser known.*

*The Yoga-perfected sees it in due season within*

*the Self. 38*

**Yoga**—union of reason with the Self.

**Yoga-Siddha**—A person who possesses self-abiding reason and with such reason controlling his senses engages in activity without attachment to fruit solely for world-harmony, that is, a person who has developed a mentality described in Shlokas 19, to 22.

A man conducting himself habitually for a time in the way outlined in Shlokas 19 to 23, ultimately arrives at a stage when not only does he act without attachment, but gives up even the idea of agency. Then his action merges in the total divine activity. He acquires the Shloka 24 mentality.

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरंणाधिगच्छति ॥ ३६ ॥

*Gains this knowledge man of faith, assiduous  
and sense disciplined,  
Knowledge obtained, he speedily attains peace  
supreme. 39*

This (practical) knowledge is gained by those who are full of faith in what they are taught, who have brought their senses under control by cultivation of self-abiding reason and are ever ready to put into practice what they have learnt in theory. Possessed of such knowledge they begin to abide in that state in their life and attain the Supreme.

The knowledge (Gyan) referred to here is not theoretical appreciation of the fundamentals, but the self-illuminated state of being which serves as the guiding basis of normal daily activity. In normal activity the self treats himself simply a channel for divine activity and the idea of agency disappears altogether.

### Fate of a Doubter

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ ४० ॥

*The ignorant, devoid of faith and torn with  
doubt self perishes.*

*Neither this world nor the next nor happiness is  
there for the doubting self. 40<sup>b</sup>*

But he who is ignorant of the three fundamental categories and their inter-relation, who has no faith in what he is taught, and whose mind cannot arrive at a decisive conclusion but is torn with doubt, is bound to perish. There is no hope here or hereafter, or happiness for a self who does not know his own mind and lacks confidence in himself.

This is a very direct hit on Arjun, who had displayed amazing ignorance of the fundamentals, nay, more, had shown incapacity to grasp even when taught. He had not only shown want of faith in Krishna's teaching, but was putting ignorant questions. Although he had in II—7 requested Krishna to give his definite opinion as to his line of conduct, which opinion Krishna had given in categorical terms fortified by acute reasoning. Arjun was so utterly confused and the idea of avoiding bloodshed had so gripped him that any ambiguity in Krishna's argument or point difficult to understand was caught hold of in its support.

So Krishna after further elaborating his theme of non-fruit-regarding action as not only the only right action in view of the dependence of fruit upon the co-operation of other factors beyond one's control, but also as leading to salvation, the ultimate end of all life-activity, categorically tells Arjun, that in his present state he was a doomed person without hope, unless he appreciated what he was taught and acted as advised.

## Both Yoga and Knowledge are Essential for Liberation

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणि ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।

आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्यन्ति धनंजय ॥ ४१ ॥

*Who has renounced action (agency) by Yoga  
and torn asunder doubt by knowledge,  
Self-controlled, action binds him not,*

*O Conqueror of Treasure. 41*

The self is eternal and indestructible, without any wants. All doubt therefore arises on account of attachment to the body as the seat of joy and sorrow. It revolves round the physical body as centre. So one who knows the self separate from the body, and the body activity as part of the universal activity for satisfying the needs of sentient life, makes an offering of his activity for the good of all which includes his own.

He shedding off all care for the body, free of all doubt, rooted in his indestructibility, gradually developing reason which abides in his self, becomes independent of sense-objects. And acting without attachment for a time, he treats his actions as offerings in the Eternal Sacrifice of world activity. So progressing, he ultimately arrives at a state when he treats the body activity as God's own and gives up all idea of agency.

When a man has renounced all idea of agency by union with the Divine and destroyed doubt by true knowledge, and his body is under control, then his body activity does not involve him in bondage to action for the purpose of enjoying its fruit.

Arjun is now asked to engage in battle being conscious that an ignorant doubting self goeth to destruction and a self-controlled wise man abiding in the self, acting without attachment, nay, treating his body-activity as God's own, attains supreme peace.

### Call to Fight

तस्माद्ज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनाऽऽत्मनः ।

द्विष्वैनं . संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥४२॥

*Therefore ignorance born, in thy heart residing  
by the sword of Self-knowledge,  
Tear off this doubt, resort to Yoga and rise up,*

O Bharat. 42

Knowing the nature of your self tear off this doubt, "who is stronger of the two"? "Shall we win or they"? "We shall enjoy bloodstained feasts by killing the Gurus". "Shall we incur sin by killing our kin"? as the product of ignorance, and renouncing attachment to fulfilment of your cherished longings, unconcerned as to the result of the battle whether victory or defeat, get up and fight. Fighting in this attitude you would not be bound by the consequences thereof.

It is clear from this that knowledge is meant for activity, and is not intended to lead to inactivity. The function of knowledge is to make activity of the nature of Sh. 24, establishing the reign of righteousness. There is no such thing as non-action ("Akarma") without knowledge and no realised practical knowledge without Akarma. Theoretical learning is worth little because (III—5) without sense-control, craving would drag

him ever into self-regarding action and make his life a tornado of contradictions defeating the purpose of knowledge. Wisdom is knowledge of the three essentials and their relations. It acts as the substratum of action in a controlled body.

इति श्री मद्भगवद्गीता० ज्ञानकर्मसंन्यासयोगो चतुर्थोऽध्यायः

*End of Chapter IV . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*  
**YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE OF RENUNCIATION OF ACTION**

## CHAPTER V

### Yoga of Renunciation of Action

#### अध्याय ५

Arjun is however still confused and treats wisdom as a state of inaction in contrast with Yoga—a state of action. He takes the teaching that man, when grown full in wisdom, should treat God as actor within him, as meaning a complete cessation of activity by himself and so instead of getting up to fight he asks Krishna for further light.

अर्जुन उवाच

संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।

यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥ १ ॥

**Arjun said—**

*Renunciation of action, O Krishna then Yoga  
(of action) thou praiseth,*

*Of the two the one better, ye tell me decisively. 1*

The question discloses a disturbed state of mind and aversion to fight still continues. Can there be a more apt instance of the futility of theoretical learning than the case of Arjun taught by a friend, a master of wisdom, a perfect being with such patience and skill? Where control of emotions is wanting or where the senses and mind are not under the control of reason, knowledge is



of no avail. There is no wisdom without Karma-Yoga (Buddhi-Yoga), it is simply a transplantation of some matter scribed on paper into the mind of man. The man becomes a lumber room and no more. He makes his life worse, for there is conflict between the body-activity determined by sensations and appetites and mind-activity which wants to visualise the learning. So Arjun repeats the mistake he made at the end of Chapter II. His mind grasps at anything which lends support to his keen desire to avoid battle.

श्री भगवानुवाच

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।

तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥२॥

**The Lord said—**

*Renunciation and Yoga of action both lead to  
the highest good*

*But of the two, better indeed is Yoga of action  
than renunciation of action. 2*

### **Sannyasi Defined**

ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।

निर्व्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥३॥

*Know him to be a Sannyasi, who neither dislikes  
nor craves,*

*Free from opposites, Oh mighty armed, such a  
one is easily released from bondage. 3*

A man does not become a Sannyasi by giving up body activity because of laziness or ignorance or some family quarrel or fear of inconveniencing the body in

working for his living or out of a desire to enjoy life at the expense of others.

A true *Sannyasi*—renotuncer of action—is a person of a different mould altogether. He is no such hypocritical coward. He is a person self-illuminated, and knows himself sitting in the chariot, which he regards as an instrument for fulfilment of will Divine. His body is ever active in the interest of world harmony, but he attributes the direction of that activity not to himself but to God. He gives up all idea of agency in action even though his body be active, and in this sense he as a pure self has *mentally* renounced action. It is not meant that he the embodied self has renounced body-activity a task impossible of accomplishment. Knowing his body-activity but an expression of divine will, he has neither attachment nor aversion to sense-objects. He rises above the pairs, heat and cold, joy and sorrow, success and defeat, gain and loss, as they are in truth body affections in his eyes. He preserves a balanced calm while moving in the world. A person of such knowledge and with such an attitude towards the changing phenomena of the world is a true *Sannyasi*. He is liberated easily from bondage, for bondage lies in attachment to sense-objects only.

### Sankhya and Yoga are same

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न परिहृताः ।

एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यग्भयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥ ४ ॥

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ ५ ॥

*Of Sankhya and Yoga, children speak as different  
and not the learned.*

*One fully devoted to any reapeth the fruit of,  
both.*

*By the Sankhyas, whatever position is gained,  
by the Yogis is the same attained.*

*Sankhya and Yoga are the same, who seeth thus  
he seeth. 5*

### **Sankhya Yoga**

It is mental dissociation from activity treating it as God ordained. Man on account of old tendencies and habits acts from self-regarding motives, because of want of control over the senses. As memory connection of sense-activity with self-regarding purposes is not destroyed or interfered with (agency is deliberately eschewed) so the practice is demonstrably self-regarding. Reason is ineffective because of the powerful effect of old tendencies and dispositions, in fact, the entire mental make up which so far has been built up on a self-regarding

### **Karma Yoga**

It is mental dissociation from fruit of action, treating it as one's offering in the Universe cycle. In course of time by constantly engaging in action without regard to fruit man's activity becomes Universe-harmony regarding. He acquires a mentality in which actor-sense is destroyed and the state of mental dissociation from activity is realised in practice which is true *San-nayas*.

basis. ("Even the wise act according to nature" Ch. III—33). The remedy against this self-regarding activity lies in control of affection and aversion to sense-objects (Ch. III—34). This is the special province of Karma-Yoga. So Karma Yoga is essential.

So whether we enter from the right or the left what needs handling is sense-activity. In either case it has to be trained to get practical results. This is done by purifying and controlling the mind, by developing a self-abiding reason as explained in the Buddhi-Yoga section of Chapter II.

### Yoga gives Quicker Results

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः ।

योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म न चिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥६॥

*Attainment of renunciation, O mighty armed,  
is hard for one untrained in Yoga,  
While a Yoga-trained sage ere long reaches the  
Supreme. 6*

Mental dissociation with action in an ever active body with pre-formed dispositions, definite habits, a whole mine of previous unexhausted *Sanskar* (action) in the sub-conscious (*Chit*), firm association of each former activity with a self-regarding object in the memory, all start a most terrible struggle within. And mind as an originator of sense-activity and governed

by previous memory traces sways man and carries him away inspite of all his learning.

“Even of the striving learned man, O Kuntiborn, the powerful senses impetuously win over the mind” (Ch. II—60). An untrained body and fickle understanding are not proper vehicles for realising renunciation in practice. Therefore sense-control and stable reason is necessary. “Keeping them in his bidding, in self-abiding, who sits devoted to Me who has disciplined the senses, his reason is poised” (Ch. II—61).

The way to control the senses is to screen them from their objects. “Therefore, he mighty armed, who has withdrawn from all sides his senses from their objects, his understanding is poised” (Ch. II—68).

Stable understanding is essential for Sannyas.

In Sankhya-Yoga an untrained body is constantly interfering, and giving trouble; the flesh proves to be weak though the spirit be not wanting. The poor man breaks on the shoals of hard reality and finds that without Karma-Yoga his knowledge or wisdom is not of much avail amidst the daily calls of the body.

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेंद्रियः ।

सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥७॥

*Trained in Yoga, pure-minded, self ruled, and  
sense-conqueror,  
Looking upon all selves like his own, acting, he  
remains untainted. 7*

A man who has by practice developed a self-abiding reason controlling his body machinery including

the senses, and is self-illuminated, knowing all to be rooted in the Supreme, is not bound by action at all. In time his theoretical learning is actualised by constant practice. He contemplates the self in his essence. To him every self appears like his own, for he sees that difference and distinction are in the body only, which is material and separate. They cannot be the property of the soul. He therefore loves all souls as he does his own, for the barrier of the body which divides, is for him broken down by knowledge and illumination.

### A Knower of Truth

नैव किञ्चित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।

पश्यंश्ृण्वन्स्पृशंजिघ्रन्निश्चिन्तन्ध्वसन्स्वपन् ॥८॥

प्रलपन्विमृजन्मृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥९॥

*I do nothing considers a self-abiding knower of  
truth,  
While seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating,  
moving, sleeping, breathing. 8  
Speaking, giving, holding, opening and closing  
the eyes,  
The senses rove amongst their objects, so doth  
he hold. 9*

This man has now attained a state in which to him his activity becomes an element of the divine activity as in Sh. 24 of Chapter IV.

All is divine fulfilment. Senses rove in obedience to orders from above or from God within. He is the

Actor. This mentality is only possible to a Yog-trained knower of Essence, to a "Yukt" and "Tatwavit", and not to a sensualist. "Senses revolving in nature", cannot do any harm to such a one. When not for self's sake their action can only be for fulfilment, which must be good and beneficent for all.

### Yogi in Action

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।

लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥ १० ॥

*Dedicating actions to the Supreme, who acts  
without attachment,*

*He is untainted by sin like water on lotus-leaf. 10*

Having given up attachment to fruit, he sitting within, having no concern of his own with the product of his activity, remains unaffected by the good or evil effect of the act. In fact there is no evil effect at all for its very possibility is destroyed. Nor is he affected by the good result, for that enures to the one to which the action was dedicated, namely the Universe through God.

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।

योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति संगं त्यक्त्वाऽऽत्मशुद्धये ॥ ११ ॥

*With body, mind, intellect and senses only,  
Yogis act without attachment for self-purity. 11*

**Yogi contrasted with an Ordinary man**

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।

अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥ १२ ॥





pure luminosity, and involve him in affection or aversion to them. He is like an engineer watching a cinema film operating, to see that the machinery is in order, taking care that the machinery while acting does not involve him in the delusion of treating its disorder as his own, through intimate touch.

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।

न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ १४ ॥

*Neither agency nor activity does the Self create  
for the world,*

*Nor union of action to fruit, Nature, however,  
revolves. 14*

The self simply finds the senses, mind and reason ready to hand with differentiated functions. He is not the originator of their respective activities or functions. Nor is he responsible for the idea of agency—actor mentality. He (the embodied) arrogates to himself these activities by egoism. Egoism too he finds existing ready made and is not his creation. Before he has any conscious power to decide and act freely he finds it in operation. In fact this egoism is responsible for the wrong decisions of life. It has to be removed by deliberate, consistent effort, and agency referred to its original source, the Supreme.

Activity is rooted in Nature of which the afore-said tools are the functioning manifestations. During gestation, interaction of organs and food and air goes on independantly of the conscious will of the foetus. Even after birth, organs are drawing in food for the needs of the body of which the child is unaware. Man is

ignorant of how food taken in is transformed into substances required for the body, yet he takes food without sure knowledge of what it would actually do. He does so not voluntarily but under a compelling force. That compelling force really moves the senses to get materials for the body. He who controls this compelling force and directs it, is the agent and not the self who is helplessly driven to obey it. The so-called instincts of self-preservation and propagation are impulses which are found in the body active independent of the self's volition as consciousness dawns. He who is responsible for planting these inside is the agent and not the self. Given these, the self is helplessly driven to satisfy them, all luminosity and knowledge notwithstanding. How can he then be responsible for the creation of the idea of act or agency attributed to an embodied self. Nature alone, under His guidance, manifesteth. "By the qualities of nature are all actions performed. The ego blinded self thinketh I am the doer" "Who, O! mighty armed, knows the inside essence of the division of qualities and functions. The qualities rove in qualities. Knowing so remains unattached." (Chapter III—27 and 28).

Nor is the self responsible for associating particular fruit with particular action. That is ordained by laws of nature wholly independent of his volition. In fact he can never know for certain if a particular action will result in some fore-known fruit. All he can know is that activity can never end in nothing, it must produce some result in the world without or for the matter of that even within. Cause and effect is the play of nature.

### Good and Evil

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।

अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥१५॥

*The Lord does not accept the evil or good of  
any being,  
By ignorance is enveloped wisdom, thereby  
creatures are deluded. 15*

When "I" does not act then how can God accept good or evil deeds. If He is the real actor, then He will be accepting His own good and bad deeds. Neither would the self in his purity take the imprint of good or bad actions of the body. For changes in the world of matter affect the body only as a result of its activity, for which the soul is not responsible (being neither actor nor agent). As the essential nature of the soul is not realised due to ignorance which covers his knowledge, men are deluded. Identification of soul with the body is responsible for the delusion that the imprint of good or bad deeds is on the soul. But in fact it only attaches to the body-part, and not the soul-part. As the whole is treated as a unity due to ignorance the soul part identifying itself with the body part becomes bound to the body part and remains so till man realises his relation thereto. By hard practice of non-attachment and evenness amidst body affections caused by so-called good and bad deeds, he is liberated from the chain of bondage. (Chap. XIII, Shs. 20-21.)

### The Self-Knower

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।

तेषामादित्यवर्जज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥१६॥

*Whose ignorance is destroyed by knowledge of  
the self,  
For them knowledge, like the sun illumines the  
Supreme. 16*

### The God-Knower

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।  
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥ १७ ॥

*Reason abiding in that, mind absorbed in that,  
rooted in that, devoted to that,  
They go never to return, their sins washed away  
by knowledge. 17*

Having withdrawn their affection from the world of sense-objects as aforesaid, they give their whole being to contemplation of the Eternal, their activity becomes His and they acquire the God-state of Sh. 24 of Chapter IV. Having given up contact with the world, they never return to it. What for are they to return to it? To enjoy the pleasures of life! But they look for no pleasures in objects of sense, they find joy in contact with the Divine. So they for the very reason that we return to the world remain with God namely to enjoy. The object of enjoyment creates the difference. If God, there is God contact, if phenomenal world, there is sense-contact which means a cycle of birth and death.

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।  
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च परिहृताः समदर्शिनः ॥ १८ ॥

*An humble learned Brahman, a cow or an  
elephant,  
A dog and a dog-eater, sages view alike with the  
same eye. 18*

Having permanently acquired a state of consciousness which looks upon all activity within and without as God ordained, he who sees God acting in everything loses all sense of duality and looks upon all sentient life with the same eye. (Chap. XIII, Sh. 60).

इहैव तैर्जितः सगौ येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।

निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥ १९ ॥

*Even here is the mortal plane conquered by those  
whose mind dwells in equanimity;  
Because the Supreme is stainless and equanimous  
they are rooted in the Eternal. 19*

When the mind becomes rooted in such evenness of outlook then all desire to injure or exploit others for personal gain vanishes altogether. The exploiter and the exploited are both God moved; if one source impells them both, if both are in the same hands, then duality is destroyed, and no antagonism is left. The world is thus conquered, for what is there left to resist or thwart such a one. He is the same to all. There is no differentiation, and consequently no heart-burning. Such is the nature of his Maker and therefore he becomes rooted in Him.

न प्रहृष्येत्प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।

स्थिरबुद्धिरसम्मूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः ॥ २० ॥

*Neither rejoiceth on obtaining the pleasant nor  
grieveth on obtaining the unpleasant,  
Of steadfast reason and clear minded the  
God-knower rested in Him. 20*

What to others is pleasant or unpleasant on account of body-affections, is for him of one even tenor as he has risen above the affections, reason rooted in the self, within, clear minded he knows his Maker (Brahman) and abides in Him.

बाह्यस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।

स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते ॥२१॥

*Whose Self is unattached to external contacts or  
objects of sense finds happiness within,  
That God unioned Self enjoys bliss unending. 21*

Such a one, whose self has withdrawn him from looking for enjoyment in sense-objects, which by nature are ever changing, making their enjoyer a prey to shifting moods of joy and sorrow, finds true joy within as there is calm within. He only faces one single entity, his Maker, and uniting with Him, abiding in Him, he finds enduring happiness.

### Nature of Sense-Enjoyments

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।

आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥२२॥

*These enjoyments born of sense contact are verily  
wombs of pain,  
Fleeting, with a beginning and end O Kunti-born,  
the knowing rejoice not therein. 22*

This association of the mind with sense-objects is the prime cause of man's misery. These external objects are the wombs of all pain. They force their victim to busy himself with perpetual adjustment of his

mental machinery, dispositions, habits and external relations (wife, children, friends, etc.) to keep pace with their changing character, if he is to retain the mood of joy in their midst. This task is inherently impossible of fulfilment, hence man's quest for happiness on the one hand and his total failure from the beginning of time, to hunt it out in sense-enjoyment in the world without on the other. He goes in quest of joy and gathers a load of sorrow, for he is unable to adjust himself to a changing without. Why, the very thing for which he goes in quest of joy is betraying him every moment. It (body) is itself ever changing its wants and giving differing decisions as to what would satisfy them. It does not know itself, for it is a new "itself" every moment, how is it to know? The self alone is the constant factor, but it is really without wants. By attempting to treat this "itself" as if it were permanent and unchanging like himself he is attempting the impossible. Hence the failure of all so far to give joy to this "itself" or to satisfy this "itself" by means of its co-born companions, the sense-objects masquerading as wholly different entities. Those who know, do not get mixed up with them.

### The Happy Man

शक्रोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक् शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।

कामक्रोधोद्वेगं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥२३॥

*One who is able to withstand here on earth  
before casting off the body,  
The surges produced by craving and anger,  
He is self-abiding, he is the happy man.*

Craving drags man into the arena of sense-objects, there alone he seeks satisfaction. He voluntarily gives them dominion over himself. They become his happy goal. He must attain them or feel miserable and unhappy. Anything, any force, which puts an obstacle in his way arouses his anger. So while in the arena impelled by desire, resistance to its fruition puts him on the war-path. The battle is joined and there is a never-ending duel unto death for the right to humbly wait on the evanescent objects for granting the boon of craving satiation, which for ought we know may have changed, yielding place to a new one, during the progress of the duel, leaving all combatants defeated and in despair mourning over their folly. Desire and overcoming resistance to its satiation keep a man busy with the world. All his activities, affections and antagonisms are due to the powerful action of these two. They allow him no time to withdraw within and know his true nature. For if this were to happen then he would know that he was indulging in a game of will-o'-the-wisp, and would quickly withdraw from this deceptive stage fight and abide within in his self. Such a man is in for true happiness.

"Thou too hast seen O Prince! as thou didst well describe, that offices howsoever high, places and powers howsoever great, worlds howsoever glorious, lives howsoever far reaching in space and long lasting in time, are still as much short of the Infinite and the Supreme as the lowest, meanest, poorest, smallest and most ephemeral, that mere addition of the finite to the finite will not make the infinite, that the Inner alone is the Inner and the Infinite, ever present and ever available if we



would only turn our eyes to It, that the Outer is always only the Outer and always within the Inner and that the knowledge of the Inner and the Infinite alone can bring satisfaction”.

(*Mystic Experiences—Bhagwandass*)

### In Tune with the Infinite

योन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।

स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥२४॥

*He who is joyous within, who enjoys within, who  
is illumined within,*

*That Yogi Brahma-like, becomes in tune with*

*Brahman. 24*

A man, who changes his field of enjoyment from the world of sense to the self within, finds himself in tune with the Infinite—Brahman. There at last he faces something which is changeless, fixed and eternal. There is no adjustment to kaleidoscopic change as in the world of sense. He finds every joy inside and becomes eternally joyous like God.

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।

द्विन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥२५॥

*Holy men enjoy divine communion their sins  
worn away,*

*Dualities torn asunder, self-restrained intent on  
the welfare of all. 25*

कामक्रोधविमुक्तानां यतीनाम् यतचेतसाम् ।

अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥२६॥

*Free of desire and anger, devotees, mind under  
control,  
Divine communion lies at hand to the knowers  
of Self. 26.*

This constant companionship is available to all who would let their body move under orders of their Maker. Let them put Him in charge of the body machine and then perforce. He will be dragged into companionship with them, for the machine requires ever vigilant supervision and watch. But there are conditions. Desire and anger put this body under the dominion of the world of sense (Sh. 23). Sense-objects claim exclusive devotion to themselves and exploit the services of the mind as they please. The body cannot serve two masters, it cannot be operated by two agencies. So the oath of allegiance has to be sworn to God and not to sense-objects, which means giving up of desire (for sense objects) and anger, as well as weening away of the mind from its external outings and rooting it in the self within.

### **The Free Man of the Gita**

The normal state of being of a free man. How a free man lives?

स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भुवोः ।  
प्राणायानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥२७॥

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।  
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥२८॥

*Stopping the external contacts out, eyes fixed  
amidst the eye-brows,  
Equalising the in and out breath moving in the  
nostrils.\* 27*

*Controlling the senses, mind and reason, a sage  
intent on liberation,  
Having renounced desire, free of anger who lives,  
is verily freed. 28*

Flow of breath registers the slightest change of feeling or emotion within. The slightest departure from the normal is indicated in change of breathing. There is imperative necessity therefore of equalising the flow of breath within the nostrils. This attained, perfect physical and mental equilibrium amidst the heaviest sorrows and the most difficult of situations is assured.

Gathering of attention or concentration in the *Agyan Chakra* between the eye-brows brings the senses, mind, and reason under control. From this seat holding attention the self surveys the field and gives command to the workers, senses, mind and reason, unaffected by the world without. He gives up craving for sense-objects and renounces anger consequent on resistance to the activity of workers on the world stage. These two powerful cords drag the self out of his base within.

*Therefore always seeking liberation from bondage to sense phenomena who moves in absolute command of the body chariot, a true charioteer, and lives in the world in the attitude of concentration described above is in truth a free man.*

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।

सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥२६॥

*Enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities and Lord  
of all the worlds,  
And comrade of all being having known Me so  
he attains peace. 29*

The whole Universe is a sacrifice, and He the mover, established therein. On the personal analogy of I being the enjoyer of body activity, God is called the enjoyer of cosmic activity.

All activity is therefore good, each element including mine contributes to it. So I should make my activity harmonious with the rest, else there would be friction. The safest course is to make it other regarding or unattached; let the body machinery be at the disposal of its real owner, for I am not responsible, I simply find myself seated therein. Nor do I create its functions, I simply find them there in action before I am conscious of them. I simply become a spectator of the Divine game. My enjoyment is in the enjoyment of the Lord who is seated within as companion. The activity is the creation of the Master of all, animate and inanimate, it is good for the whole, good for the parts and therefore all enjoyment for all.

Man while acting outwardly is really not acting inwardly but really watching the Divine Dance, seeing even his contribution to it. He sees the Divine seated within him, the Master of all, as his companion, he the illumined self in the company of the Great Master,

enjoying the play. Why should he not have peace here and hereafter?

All activity of *Prakriti* including that of the body is to be attributed to Him. He is the ultimate agent or Actor. "Not a blade moves but with his will." The conclusion of all this discussion is that *Sannyas* (Renunciation) is not cessation of body activity but mental renunciation of activity by the self as an entity, and attributing the agency to God as the ultimate (*Karta*) Actor and Enjoyer (*Bhokta*).

इति श्री मद्भगवद्गीता ० कर्मसंन्यास योगो नाम पंचमोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter V . . . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*

YOGA OF RENUNCIATION OF ACTION

## CHAPTER VI

### Yoga of Meditation

श्री भगवानुवाच

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निरन चाक्रियः ॥ १ ॥

The Lord said—

*Who not minding fruit of action*

*doeth obligatory duty*

*He is a Sannyasi and a Yogi*

*not the fireless or the riteless. 1*

**Fireless:** One not working for his living and cooking for self and guests out of his earnings, in discharge of social obligations.

**Riteless:** One giving up performance of ritual prescribed for a house-holder.

True Sannyas or Yoga consists in the annihilation of desire for personal or class gain as a motive of action, and performance of action for the welfare of the world, as duty owed to the Supreme. One who gives up the life of a house-holder out of fear of the vicissitudes of fortune and lives on necessities supplied by others is neither a Sannyasi nor a Yogi. Any one, whatever his situation, occupation or stage of life, is a Sannyasi or Yogi if the idea of self has yielded

place to the idea of gain of all, and action whatever its nature is performed as discharge of an obligation owed to the Divine. A so-called Sannyasi or Yogi wearing yellow robes may be a low type of man altogether if his mind is the playground of all sorts of desires for good food, money, clothings, personal comforts, honour, name, lust, anger, hate and ill-will towards other persons, while a house-holder who by constant practice has risen above these may be a truly illumined soul. Not dress and outer form, nor body mortification but sense-mastery and vivid consciousness of one's eternity is the real test.

### Sannyas and Yoga Same

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पांडव ।

न ह्यसंन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥२॥

*What they call renunciation*

*Know the same to be Yoga, O Pandava,*

*Mental affections not renounced*

*how can such a one be a Yogi? 2*

One who has renounced all desire-impelled actions, i.e., treats himself as an instrument of will Divine to carry out His wishes for maintenance of world harmony is a Sannyasi. One who acts without attachment to fruit, i.e., in whom when he commences action, the impelling force is not desire for personal or class gain is a Yogi. Such activity is possible only when there is no mental dwelling in the mind on the probable personal gain accruing therefrom before commencing it. The action is without desire, which

is true Sannyas. So both indicate the same state within.

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।  
 योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥  
 यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।  
 सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥ ४ ॥

*For the Yoga-ascending Muni*

*activity is declared the means*  
*When he is fixed in Yoga,*  
*serenity becomes the means.*

*When he is unattached to objects of sense or to*  
*action*

*A renouncer of all mental affections,*

*then he is said to be fixed in Yoga. 4*

**Sankalpa:** Activity of the imaging faculty, mental planning and guessing of results of plans so formed.

### Self Culture

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।  
 आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बंधुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ ५ ॥  
 बंधुरात्माऽऽत्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।  
 अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥ ६ ॥

*Elevate the Soul by the self*

*do not allow the soul to fall*  
*Verily the soul is the friend of the self*

*and the soul is enemy thereof. 5*



*The soul is the friend of him who has brought  
the self under his bidding  
But towards the unconquered-self, the soul  
enemy-like adopts a hostile attitude.* 6

**Self:** Senses, mind, reason and egoism.

Normally human activity proceeds from a sub-conscious base which is the receptacle of all past impressions and gives a definite disposition to each individual, colouring all his activity. It affects the entire machinery: senses, mind and reason. They acquire a definite *modus operandi*. So the main problem is to modify this sub-conscious base by conscious effort. If the traces therein can be worked so as to destroy the old association of sense-activity with a self-regarding aim or sensual enjoyment and substitute therefor a new association with aims in which there is no thought of self, the man is on the path of progress.

The soul sitting inside tumultuously dragged away by the powerful mental-machinery not heeding his behests comes down upon it when his control is restored and behaves like an enemy. The self as the party affected by operations of the machine and as one for whose benefit it exists, naturally accords it different treatment causing friction in its operation, according as it fulfils his purpose and meets his demands. Generally by gradual and unconscious processes the machinery takes its cue from external factors. It allows itself to be exploited by others because of the maltraining of reason. While assuming that it works in the interest of the dweller within, it really carries out the plans of others and is an instrument for fulfilment of their

purpose. When this dawns upon the embodied self, he feels sorrow and invites rebuke of the soul.

. The dweller within finds that he is not its master. Why? Because of wrong notions about the body. He identifies himself with it, and does not realise that the body exists only to carry out his purposes. The demands of the machine parts, for preservation and rejuvenation by proper action, instead of being notices for a temporary diversion of attention from the main purpose for which the body is active become the sole subject of his attention. The whole of waking life is devoted to serving the machinery for its own sake, unaware of the purpose for which it is placed at the disposal of the self. The whole position is inverted and the role of the self becomes that of a slave of the machine. This is degrading the soul, against which Arjun is warned.

### Yoga Attitude

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥७॥

*Of the self-victor, serene and calm the self is  
ever equipoised*

*In joy sorrow, heat cold, honour and  
dishonour. 7*

Body affections of joy, sorrow, heat and cold from which he is separate, he regards inevitable as they are rooted in the changes which are inherent in Nature. They are due to sense-objects, whose nature it is to change and to bring about changes in body-feeling

also. He is not responsible for the eternal flux and so does not bother about the inevitable.

*Honour or Dishonour:*—He knows that the world judges the actions of an individual according to their usefulness. The criterion is not the motive of the actor, but how far his action is conducive to its welfare in its eyes. But in many cases the world is deluded altogether as to its real interests and under some influence treats a temporary gain as more valuable. It then becomes the duty of a self-controlled man to show disregard for temporary applause or honour and mould his action according to his own judgment of what is of permanent benefit to it. He keeps poise amidst the alternating waves of honour and dishonour and does not allow them to influence his activity at all, but goes his even pace, rooted in the Supreme.

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेंद्रियः ।

युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकांचनः ॥८॥

*Full of knowledge, wisdom, unshaken, and sense-victorious  
Yukt is such yogi called, clay, stone and gold  
to him same. 8*

1. *Knowledge:*—Cognition of one's eternity and relation to the body and the world.
2. *Wisdom:*—Consciousness of the nature of the wheel of the universe operated by the beneficent Supreme bringing about a sense of harmony with everything therein.

Conscious of the nature and aim of the world cycle he conquers the senses and becomes stable; he leaves his commissariat arrangements to the Supreme and becomes indifferent to the nature and value of sense-objects and views them all of equal importance. What does it matter if a certain thing is called gold and is regarded as having the power of purchasing so many consumable commodities, a stone, an article of small value and a lump of clay, a useless thing. He sees value in them too, he knows they play as essential a part in corporate service as gold. He knows every particle of the universe to be equally essential. Everything is set in its proper place. It is by abstraction that for purposes of convenience men taking for granted the operation and existence of the rest regard one particular object as valuable.

As the activity of the neglected components is independent of his attention, bound as they are by unalterable law, they go on fulfilling their functions unmindful of man's disregard, with consequences favourable to him. The knower of essence of things regards every single particle to be indispensable.

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।

साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥६॥

*Who adopts same attitude towards well-wishers,  
friends, foes, neutrals, and arbiters, the  
jealous and relatives  
Even towards the good and the sinning, he is  
better still. 9*

That man is better still, who in addition to the above equipment realises all relations of the body-politic to be devices of the Supreme for preserving society and is not fascinated and disturbed by them. He knows that as man he too has come in temporary relation with individual members who regard him from their own angles and bear particular relations. But he retains a sense of equality for them all, as therein he sees the hand of Providence and inevitability of relation as long as he is confined in the body casement. What is inevitable he accepts in a spirit of joyous calm.

[Shs. 10-26. How to attain Yoga]

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।

एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥ १० ॥

*A Yogi should constantly practise  
concentration sitting in a quiet place,  
Alone, with mind and self controlled, without  
expectation and (sense of) possession. 10*

Nothing in fact belongs to any man. So long as he is alive he has certain wants for the upkeep of the body machine. His sense of possession in worldly goods is all in relation to these wants. They are supposed to secure future satisfaction. They have no other meaning.

There is nothing with which he does not part possession at some time or other voluntarily or by force (theft, loss, destruction, forfeiture, user, gift, tax,

etc.). In the end on dissolution of the body, the self remains alive as before, but there is separation from old possessions altogether. He who knows God to be in charge of this Cycle, and responsible for body activity, has faith that He would maintain its efficiency. He need have no sense of possession, for nothing is his. Everything is part of the storehouse of Nature for the needs of all, in charge of a Director who wishes well of all and looks after all. He draws for his immediate needs upon the Universal store for body upkeep and then busies himself with his Master's errand in return for his enjoyment to which all have contributed.

*Expectation:*—Of what? He needs nothing. Everything is provided. What he needs is faith and knowledge of Reality. Equipped with these, he need have no thought about future happenings with which expectation in man concerns itself.

*Note:*—There is here no restriction of caste, colour or sex. The place recommended is a quiet spot. It does not mean retiring to the jungle and living in seclusion, as it imports several other restrictions. In order to follow the directions about diet, he will have to be a man with some money. He will have to make arrangement in the jungle for sundry articles. He will have to make provision for the family, so if poor or with young children and dependants he cannot go. He will have to be a male as lonely jungle has its own dangers for the weaker sex. Sudden severance of worldly ties might bring about an internal mental conflict making practice impossible.

Yoga is control of sense-activity and suppression

of passion and appetite. How can sense-control be tested in lonely jungle? Where is there the opportunity for training the senses, when there is no occasion for their activity. Desire and anger require a certain live environment. Senses are weened from their objects amidst objects and not when they are absent. In the jungle there is nothing to conquer, except possibly the recollection of past enjoyments.

True Yogic training is possible on the world stage only. A *Yoga-buddhi* (self-abiding 'reason') is required for playing one's part on the world-stage and not for associating with the fauna and flora of the woods. His maker has given the Yogi a body to offer its activity in the Universal cosmic activity, and not for association with the denizens of the forest.

The lover of jungle life should carefully note that Krishna a house-holder is imparting this teaching to Arjun a house-holder. He is asked to become a Yogi (Sh. 46) and at the same time dissuaded from retiring into oblivion. Therefore the teaching is not to escape into the jungle from the world-stage, but choose a quiet place amidst one's surroundings for concentration and purification of the sub-conscious.

### Seat

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।

नात्युद्धृतं नातिनीचं, चैलाग्निनकुशोत्तरम् ॥ ११ ॥

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।

उपविश्यासने, युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥ १२ ॥

*In a pure spot having prepared a firm seat,  
Neither too high nor too low with Kusa grass,  
deer-skin and cloth. 11*

*There making attention one-pointed,  
checking the activity of the senses and the mind,  
Sitting on his seat he should practise Yoga for  
self-purity. 12*

Activity of the mind should be restrained by controlling mind-wandering through the action of memory. When a man sits down deliberately to ignore sense impressions, he finds that the lid of the storehouse within is lifted up, and the more he tries the more do the old memory traces bubble up and force the mind to wander in all directions. In this condition he can easily notice the rapid shiftings from one line of thought to another. Here lies his chance, he may now reflect upon the nature of his self, and his relation to this world, his body needs and the needs of his dependants, their nature and the limit of their claim upon him and the nature and function of the senses of knowledge and action. So reflecting he can re-arrange the material rising into his consciousness and cause new associations to be formed on a new basis. He can carefully note his emotional defects and the influences that make him feel nervous, produce affection or any other form of departure from the normal and then analysing the cause give new orientation to the feelings by gradual practice. He can control those particular parts of the body which have got into the habit of spontaneously responding to them by concentrating upon the nerve centres which control them. He can also give fresh training to sense-action by view-



ing sense-phenomena in the light of his reflection. By this constant practice he can slowly bring the action of the mind and senses under control and thus purify his Sub-conscious.

### Posture

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।

संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥ १३ ॥

प्रशांतात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।

मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः ॥ १४ ॥

*Holding the body, head and neck unmoved,  
fixed (in a line)*

*Gazing at nose-tip not looking at sides.* 13

*With a peaceful interior, fear-free, firm in the  
vow of continence*

*Mind collected and dwelling in Me let him sit  
balanced meditating on Me.* 14

The chief point in concentration is making the body-vibration rhythmic. Unless the whole beats with one frequency attention will be distracted. Keeping the head, neck and chest in one line in a good yoga-posture (*Padma* or *Siddha*) is a great help in preserving nervous equilibrium during the practice of concentration. Similarly instead of keeping the mind blank which is impossible in the beginning, confining the play of eyes half-closed, up to the tip of the nose is a speedier method of controlling mind activity to start with. On distraction it can be easily brought back within this range.

In this posture he should preserve calm within and try to view himself sitting in the body-chariot—a medium which brings him in contact with the world without, causing him joy and sorrow. He should make a determined effort to vividly visualise that all mental presentiments of loss or gain keep within the confines of the body, that its affections should not cause grief, as they are inevitable; that the way to manage them is by sense-restraint and alteration of the motive of activity from thought of self to thought of all.

This mental stability is rendered easy of acquisition by continence, for the nerves within remain toned by the vital-juice (semen) and help in concentration.

He may while so sitting, contemplate the creative energy behind his own and that of the world. He will find on reflection that there is a Power which has brought about the soul and body connection, which has assigned different functions to the component parts of the body organism and that there is a purpose behind this differentiated activity. He would know that non-sentient agents also are moved by this Power for fulfilment of its purpose. That is the Me, the Manifest Eternal referred to in this shloka.

युञ्जन्नेवं सदाऽऽत्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।

शांतिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामविगच्छति ॥ १५ ॥

*By engaging constantly in Yoga, the Yogi of  
controlled mind  
Attains peace which is in Me and culminates  
in unceasing communion with the Divine.*

What causes mental worry?

1. Feeling of want, and uncertainty about its satisfaction.
2. Troubles or wants of those in whom we are interested.
3. Memory of hidden wrongs which if discovered may cause loss or bring ill-fame.
4. Doubt as to our destiny, fear of death.
5. Contemplation of separation from wealth and kin on death, without certainty as to future.

This is because we are ignorant of our immortality, and the transitory nature of our relations with men and things. By constant practice of mind control as directed above, the eternal truth gradually dawns upon the mind that God is the Supreme Master and Creator of the world for our good, eternally looking after us. He makes Himself responsible for our upkeep, provided we act with knowledge. When the controlled-self so refuges himself in the Supreme, there is nothing left to disturb. Piercing the veil of changing phenomena, he contemplates Him, the changeless Eternal in whom these inhere. He sees the universe moving, as we see a cinema film seated changeless amidst change. He sees God acting within himself as well as without. He gradually acquires living faith in the beneficent activity of the Divine as regards satisfaction of his wants. He treats worldly relations as part of the Divine scheme for world harmony. Conscious of his indestructibility he abides peaceful in his Maker.

### **Moderation All Round**

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।

न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥ १६ ॥

युक्ताऽहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७ ॥

*Yoga is not for the over-fed, nor the under-fed,  
Nor O Arjun for one who over-sleeps or the  
under-sleeper. 16*

*Temperate in diet\* and recreation  
balanced in action, sleep and waking  
For such a one Yoga becomes destructive of  
all sorrow. 17*

To work properly with the mind, it is absolutely essential that body-sensation should not distract attention. This necessitates a rhythmic vibration of the entire nervous system, which being extremely sensitive responds even to slight changes, and distracts attention. It is of the utmost importance to regulate life in such a way that there be no violent changes in nerve-beat. Therefore strict moderation in food, sleep, and recreation is enjoined, everything should be measured and defined.

### **Yoga State**

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।

निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥ १८ ॥

\*Half of the stomach for food, a quarter for water and the rest empty for air.

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नैंगते सोपमा स्मृता ।

योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥ १६ ॥

*When the disciplined mind abides solely in  
the self,*

*Then man freed from yearning in all objects  
of desire, is known as "Yukt". 18*

*Like unto a flame in a windless place  
remaining steady and unshaken,*

*Is compared the self of a Yogi of  
collected-thought and absorbed in Yoga. 19*

Sense-phenomena do not affect him, and body affections do not disturb him, conscious as he is of his indestructibility and origin as a spark from the Divine.

### Yoga Yields True Happiness

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

यत्र चैवात्मनाऽऽत्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ २० ॥

सुखमात्यंतिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।

वेत्ति यत्र न चैवाऽयं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥ २१ ॥

यं लब्ध्वा चाऽपरं लाभं मन्यते नाऽधिकं ततः ।

यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणाऽपि विचाल्यते ॥ २२ ॥

तं विद्याद् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।

स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥ २३ ॥

*When a yoga-served, collected-mind turns  
away from sense-objects*

*When by the self seeing the self he is satisfied  
in the self, 20*

*Utmost happiness cognised by the  
                                 understanding only beyond the senses,  
 When he realises fixed wherein, he is not moved  
   away from Truth. 21*

*Having gained that, he considers no other gain  
   better, fixed therein  
 Even by overwhelming sorrows he cannot be  
   shaken. 22*

*Let this be understood the state of Yoga—  
                                 severance from union with pain  
 This Yoga should be practised with an eager  
   and decisive mind. 23*

Herein is found what every one is in quest of since the beginning of time—true unalloyed happiness in which there is no connection whatever left with pain or sorrow. This is its distinguishing feature, for all enjoyment of sense-objects leaves a void, or stultifies itself by monotony and creates discontent and a desire for change. The secret of this perennial happiness which nothing, not the heaviest sorrow can shake, is self-realisation, which brings about detachment of the self from the sense-world. Its enjoyments acquire a new meaning, they become enjoyments for the body, cease to be a cause of joy or grief and give rise to a patient, unattached and joyous attitude on the part of the self. This therefore should be brought about with an unwavering and eager mind by resolute determination.

संकल्पप्रभवान्कामास्त्यक्त्वा      सर्वानशेषतः ।

मनसर्वेन्द्रियग्रामं      विनियम्य      समन्ततः ॥२४॥

शनैःशनैरुपरमेद् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।

आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥२५॥

*Renouncing totally every desire born of mental dwelling,  
Having disciplined the mind and the aggregate of senses. 24  
He should slowly draw within by patient and persevering Reason. 25*

Reason should now be held firm against intrusion from sense-affections and employed in producing dispassion towards sense-objects in daily activity leading to a state when the mind drawn in ceases to think at all and becomes unperturbably calm.

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चंचलमस्थिरम् ।

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥२६॥

प्रशांतमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।

उपैति शांतरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥२७॥

युञ्जन्नेवं सदाऽऽत्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।

सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यंतं सुखमश्नुते ॥२८॥

*Whenever moves away the mind restless and unsteady,  
Then drawing it back, put it under the sway of the self. 26  
Such peaceful, calm, Brahma-like, sin-free,  
Yogi obtains the highest happiness. 27*

*Training his mind in this way, a Yogi freed of  
sin, by the pleasure of Brahman-contact  
enjoys the highest bliss. 28*

Losing contact with sense-objects, he comes in contact with the creative energy within which moves his being. He dives deep beneath the surface and sees the inner working of the machine, and comprehending the Power behind is lost in joy everlasting.

So far as his attitude towards the body is concerned, it is one of complete mastery over the whole and its parts collectively and severally. What is the attitude of such a man towards the world?

### Yogi

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥२९॥

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥३०॥

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥३१॥

*All beings in the self and the self in all beings,  
Sees a self abiding in Brahman everywhere  
with the same eye. 29*

*Who sees Me everywhere and all in Me  
I am not lost to him nor is he lost to Me. 30*

*Abiding in all beings, who worships Me  
established as unity.*

*Himself moving in whatever ways he really  
moves in Me. 31*



## Highest Yoga

आत्मोपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं सं योगी परमो मतः ॥३२॥

*Like in himself, who everywhere views,*

*O Arjun,*

*Joy and sorrow. He is called the highest Yoga.\* 32*

The Yoga sees God *immanent* in everything. He sees Him active in everything, he views his own body-activity as really His. For him there is no duality, it is all an emanation from one single source.

Knowing the bodies of sentient beings to have a single origin, he considers them to have the same properties as his body and so on the analogy of his own, their sorrows and joys have the same force and meaning for him as for them. He who has attained such a state whereby he can enter into the feelings of all so intimately as to sense them like his own and acts accordingly for relief, becomes the highest-Yogi. He not only realises mental unity with all, but also unity of feeling which makes him in truth one with all.\*

\*This should be the attitude of man towards the world. He should see all alike, he should attach no special sanctity to the body but regard it as a tool for use, which in itself is neither pure nor impure, nor good nor bad, but only with reference to its use to the self. The self shows his true state within by the behaviour of his organs of action. Their actual condition need not matter. A paralysed body, with a pimpled face, adorned with a nose half-cut, a toothless mouth, a hunch back, a body covered with filthy bags, all these matter not to the world, immediately it recognises a high soul within. If a self illumined and abiding in God can remain untainted within a case so uncongenial,



The chief characteristic of the mind in waking life is to have some object before it to dwell upon. It can never remain blank, but can concentrate on one object at a time. It is called restless as it constantly changes its objects, because of (1) the effect of outside agencies upon the body through the five senses, (2) information sent to it from inside the body, (3) associations aroused by these two factors which themselves become the origin of new trains of thought and drag it in all directions. The changing body and the changing world without working with memory keep the mind busy and restless amidst objects desirable and undesirable. So the way to bring it under the sway of the self is to place before it an object of so great an interest to the individual, that other objects of smaller interest are not able to drag it therefrom.

There is scarcely a man alive who does not feel interest in something to such an extent that his mind can remain absorbed therein for more or less time. Some impressive scene like death, or heavy sorrow, or joy takes hold of it at times and then nothing else can intrude. The question is one of interest and value of the object to the self. But concentration of attention on objects is only comparative, restlessness as a property is still there, as sense-objects lose their novelty of interest after a time. The chief point is to train the mind by constant reflection upon the fundamental verities—Self, God and the Universe—and realise by vivid visualisation the transitory nature of worldly enjoyments. The same method by which the mind getting attached to sense-objects revels in them should be employed in inducing it to get attached to the self within and revel in him.

This is a very gradual process. By constant reflection, and exercise of will power suggestions should be made to the sub-conscious not to look for enjoyment in the changing world without but in the changeless within. Great vigilance should be exercised to get hold of opportunities when the mind dwells on sense-objects to suggest to it new meanings and interpretations to alter its attitude towards them with a view to its ultimate withdrawal therefrom. *This is called practice.*

Dispassion is renunciation of attachment and aversion to sense-objects in the knowledge that the self has no wants, and that body wants are all arranged for by a wise Providence, provided one works for world-harmony with firm faith in the Supreme.

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।

वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥ ३६ ॥

*By one of undisciplined mind is Yoga hard to  
attain, is my view,*

*By one of controlled-mind striving properly,  
it may be attained. 36*

Practice and dispassion demand control over the entire mental machinery—senses, mind, reason and egoism. A man who has control over these and can work them according to his will uninfluenced by sense-objects, can attain Yoga by the method pointed out in shlokas 10 to 26, if he strives hard. One who is devoid of control over his body cannot be a Yogi.



प्राप्य पुण्यकृताँल्लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः ।  
 शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥ ४१ ॥  
 अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।  
 एतद्धि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥ ४२ ॥  
 तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।  
 यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥ ४३ ॥  
 पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।  
 जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ ४४ ॥

### The Lord said—

*Parth, neither here nor hereafter is there for*  
*him destruction*  
*Who doeth right dear friend, never for him*  
*a woeful end.* 40  
*Attaining the regions of the righteous and there*  
*living endless years*  
*In the home of the pure and prosperous is the*  
*Yoga-fallen born.* 41  
*Or in the family of the wise Yogis does he take*  
*birth*  
*But very rare in this world is a birth of this*  
*nature.* 42  
*There in (that body) he gets the reason union*  
*of the earlier casement*  
*Thence onwards he strives for attainment of*  
*Yoga.* 43

*By (the momentum of) former practice he is  
involuntarily moved forward.  
Even an enquirer of Yoga gets beyond Vedic .  
ritualism. 44*

As he assumes a human body again on this earth his previous exertions are not wasted, but bear full fruit and hasten his process of moral and spiritual growth. Even an enquirer, in whom a desire for information about Yoga is aroused is well on the way beyond the entanglement of forms and ceremonies, as it indicates that ritualism does not satisfy him fully and his self hankers after satisfaction, higher than that afforded by the pleasures of sense.

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।

अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ ४५ ॥

*Striving assiduously the Yogi, purified of sins  
And perfected after many births attains the  
supreme state. 45*

### Yogi Superior to All

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।

कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवाऽर्जुन ॥ ४६ ॥

*The Yogi is superior to the austere  
even to the knower is the Yogi superior.  
To the actionists is the Yogi superior.  
So be a Yogi, O Arjun. 46*

*Tapaswi*—One who observes the austerities of speech, mind and body detailed in Chap. XVII, Shs. 14-16.

**Gyani**—One given to the study and discussion of Scriptures dealing with reality, who has a theoretical knowledge of the eternal verities: soul, God and the Universe.

**Karmi**—He who performs Vedic sacrifice or spends money in charitable objects for public benefit.

To all these is the Yogi superior, for he is all these and more, his knowledge is not theoretical but realised wisdom, the three austerities are for him the breath of his being, they are included in the even outlook which he has towards all. As regards action, his whole life is consecrated for public service.

### Yogi Devoted to Me the Best

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनांतरात्मना ।

श्रद्धावान्मजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥ ४७ ॥

*And amongst Yogis, with the within immersed  
in Me,  
Full of faith who worships Me he is regarded  
as the most steadfast. 47*

He is the best, who in addition to complete mind control and detachment from the world of sense and even outlook towards all beings, has refuged his whole being in God and is full of faith in Him, i.e., in addition to knowledge and activity without attachment, there is devotion to Me. He is the most equipped, his whole being is harmoniously developed. His faculties of cognition (knowledge) feeling (devotion) and will



(activity) are all given over to God, and operate as His vehicle in the interest of world harmony.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु० अध्यात्मयोगो नाम षष्ठोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter VI. . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*  
YOGA OF MEDITATION

## CHAPTER VII

### Yoga of Knowledge and Wisdom

श्री भगवानुवाच

मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युंजन्मदाश्रयः ।

असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥ १ ॥

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।

यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥ २ ॥

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।

यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥ ३ ॥

The Lord said—

*Mind devoted to Me, O Parth, refuged in Me,  
practising Yoga,*

*With certainty how ye would know Me  
integrally, listen to that.* 1

*That knowledge with wisdom I shall impart  
thee in its entirety,*

*Knowing which nothing further worth  
knowing shall remain.* 2

*Amongst thousands of men scarcely any strives  
for perfection,*

*Amongst those striving for perfection scarcely  
any knows Me in essence.* 3

## Two Forms of My Nature (Prakriti)

Krishna is here using the first person singular *I* to describe the Immanent Brahman who pervades everything that exists in nature.

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।  
 अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ ४ ॥  
 अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।  
 जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥ ५ ॥  
 एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।  
 अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥ ६ ॥  
 मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किंचिदस्ति धनंजय ।  
 मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥ ७ ॥

*Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind,*  
*understanding,*  
*And egoism, all these are eight several varieties*  
*of My nature. 4*

*This is the lower. Separate from this know*  
*My higher nature,*  
*The soul-form, O mighty-armed, by which this*  
*world is sustained. 5*

*These two are the wombs of all manifested*  
*objects,*  
*I am the origin and end of the entire Universe. 6*

*Beyond Me there is nothing whatever,  
O victor of wealth,  
All this is strung together in Me like gems in a  
string.\**

There are three categories:—

- (1) Lower *Prakriti*:—matter, energy and mind-machinery.
- (2) Higher *Prakriti*:—Self.
- (3) The Supreme Self.

The third establishes relations between the components of the first *inter se*, which manifest as myriad non-sentient objects of forms and sizes innumerable, and between (1) and (2) which manifest in myriad living beings of forms and sizes no less diverse. This third category is the Master holding both under its sway and operating them according to its will.

\*Then questioned him *Gargi*, the daughter of *Vachaknu*, "*Yajnavalkya*," said she, "all this (earth) is woven and rewoven in waters. In what are the waters?" (He replied). "In the air O *Gargi*?" "On what then is woven and rewoven the air?" "On the spheres of the middle (*antariksā*) *Gargi*." "On what the spheres of the Middle?" "On the worlds of the *Gandharvas* O *Gargi*." "On what then are woven and rewoven the worlds of the *Gandharvas*?" "On the worlds of the suns (*Adityas*) O *Gargi*." "On what the worlds of *Adityas*?" "On the worlds of the moon, O *Gargi*." "On what the worlds of the moon?" "On the worlds of the planets O *Gargi*." "On what the worlds of the planets?" "On the worlds of the *Devas*, O *Gargi*." "On what then are woven and rewoven the worlds of the *Devas*?" "On the worlds of *Indra*, O *Gargi*." "On what then are woven and rewoven the worlds of *Indra*?" "On the worlds of *Prajapati*, O *Gargi*." "On what then are woven and rewoven the worlds of *Prajapati*?" "On the worlds of Brahman O *Gargi*." (Br. Up. Adhya, 3, Brah. 6).

Nature as matter, energy or mind is in its innate form unmanifest, wholly beyond our conception. It remains in equilibrium as a self-contained system during the period of dissolution. When equilibrium is disturbed, the whole would become chaotic and irregular unless there is direction and control. This means establishment of new relations according to a plan. Homogeneity is broken and a new equilibrium is established in place of the old. The products of the new relations are different in form and property from their components. The property of the product inheres not in them individually but is manifested only when they are set up in particular relation. The property of this relation inheres in the cause of the relation, "for two relatives cannot stand independent of each other. They must have a substratum behind them which is separate and yet pervades them."

The Lower Nature (*Apara Prakriti*) is a mixture. It is original elements bound in relation. It is by the establishment of relations, that the few elements have become the many objects, and as the relations all proceed from one single cause, the whole is bound up in one supreme relation. It is a series of system within system, the whole making a huge all inclusive system operated by the Supreme.

Whatever phenomena we see in the Universe due to the establishment of relations between two or more components of the first category or of both are really a manifestation of the power and might of the Supreme Self. In Him alone their properties inhere and have their being. So ultimately all manifestation becomes a panorama of His glory and there is left nothing else

besides. His majesty is manifested through the medium of these categories.

### The Supreme I

रसोऽहमप्सु कौंतेय प्रभाऽस्मि शशिसूर्ययोः ।

. प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥८॥

*I am sapidity in water, O Arjun, and light in  
the sun and moon,*

*Aum of all the Vedas, sound in ether (Akāśh),  
manhood in men.* 8

**Rasa—Sapidity.** Hydrogen and Oxygen are gases. Sapidity is not the property of either separately nor even when mixed, except when compounded in one definite, fixed and invariable proportion. Only when the two are so brought in definite relation does sapidity appear. Are they responsible for this themselves? No, they are not self-directed.

**Prabha—Light.** The sun and moon are just balls of matter and energy. Neither constituent has this unique property of luminosity. But when the two are put in a definite relation themselves and as regards the seeing objects in space then it appears. Their vibratory motion, situation of the receiving medium and presence of a living being, all constitute a system which results in this unique phenomenon. No constituent is self-directed, all are dependent upon Me.

**Pranava—Aum.** Vedās treat of the nature and constitution of the Universe, its how and why. They are a guide to life and conduct. But where is the necessity of guidance? The Universe is an aggregate of

components adjusted in a well ordered system worked by the Supreme according to His will, so there is necessity of conformation of human activity thereto to avoid disaster. The central core of the knowledge they contain is description of the might and majesty of the Supreme Architect. This gives them their distinctive character. He is called *Pranava* or *Aum* in them.

**Shabda**—*Sound* is the property of Ether (*Akâśh*). But Ether is just the medium of travel of sound. It is bound in relation to the sounding and receiving objects with energy the fourth into a system. This complex renders possible sound.

**Paurusham**—*Manhood*. The pure self is utterly helpless, the body-form is so much food-stuffs, water and air, all as helpless. Only when they are taken into the body-machinery placed at his disposal and transformed according to immutable laws does this property arise in man. At every step the lead is Mine, Mine the law, Mine the machinery, Mine its purpose. I have brought about the arrangement.

पुण्यो गंधः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ ।

जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु ॥६॥

*Pure fragrance in earth, glow in fire,  
Life in all beings, and austerity in*

*body-mortifiers am I. 9*

**Gandha**—*Fragrance*. Earth alone cannot have it. *Akâśh* is necessary so also air and energy and a person to smell.

**Teja—Glow.** Fire exists not of itself, but in some substance, it burns in Akásh and requires air to burn. I am the agent bringing them together, for man to light the match and see the glow.

**Jivan—Life.** It manifests itself only when a self resides in the body. Who provides the body? Who arranges for its preservation and rejuvenation? Whose is the store of Nature it draws upon?

**Tapa—Austerity.** It is body, mind and speech control with reference to a certain ideal. The self finds himself in relation with body and knowledge. He manipulates the body-engine and mental-machinery, with hankering for liberation from the world, wherein a certain void is felt. This complex in relation gives rise to austerity. Separate the components, dissolve the complex and there is no austerity left in any of them. It is the product of a relation.

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।

बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥ १० ॥

*The eternal seed of all beings know Me,*

*O Parth,*

*I am the reason of the wise, and expressive  
glow of the illustrious.* 10

**Beej—Seed.** Sentient life grows from a live nucleus of matter, energy, and the life principle. In this tiny nucleus reside traces which eventually grow into the wonderful mental faculties, organs of action, and entrancingly beautiful forms—men, women, mammals, fish, reptiles, butter-flies, insects, birds of lovely skins,



feathers multicoloured and of glorious tints, fruit trees with their luscious fruit and grand foliage, plants with their flowers of forms various and hues variegated, scented and of arresting beauty.

These traces exist not in the life principle, the material case or its mental counterpart, but in the aggregate. This aggregate is a system. This it is which grows into beings (*Bhūta*) ultimately. Even this aggregate grows only under certain conditions, not of its making and never in their absence.

**Buddhi—Reason.** Man finds himself equipped with this weapon for adjusting his activity to a changing world wherefrom he supplies his needs. He sees the universe moving, and reflects upon its operation to find out the power operating it. Why? There is a desire in him to know, because of dissatisfaction with his lot. He is in quest of an ideal existence and is in search of means to attain it—a mental state which is the product of a most elaborate complex made up of the manifest world with its manifold objects of varying degrees of allurements for the self, the self and the body. Without these in relation acting to an ordered plan, there is no chance for the play of Reason.

बलं बलवतामस्मि कामरागविवर्जितम् ।

धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥ ११ ॥

*I am the strength of the strong free from  
desire and attachment,  
The desire unopposed to dharma in creatures,  
O Bull of Bharats.* 11

**Bal—Strength.** The dynamic force which is responsible for the activity of powerful living creatures is the result of a very fine adjustment of the categories, appearing in creatures for the operation of the organs of action, to be employed in selfless pursuits without attachment. When employed by men in selfish pursuits, it is considered by them to be their energy, which is a wholly mistaken idea. When they use it for *duteous action*, they treat it as from Me and in this refined sense I am this strength, as it is for this purpose that I have brought together the complex relation which exhibits energy in this form.

**Kama—Desire.** Similarly I am desire which is not against Dharma.

Desire is the very being of Life. It is impossible to exist without it. But the question is about its form. In the complex wherein this desire is manifested, i.e., the embodied self ever acting in constant relation with the changing universe of beings mutually supplying each others' wants, it has got to be there, but only to contribute to the bringing into existence of objects for the use of all according to the eternal Law of *mutual service*. Selfish desire arises due to man's ignorance of himself and his relation with the world and Me. To the relation established by Me giving rise to righteous desire, he has added another element, his ignorance, which has made all the difference and changed its nature.

### The Māya of Qualities

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।

मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥१२॥

*And these Satvic, Rajasic and Tamsic states of  
existence,  
Know them from Me, I am not in them, they  
are in Me. 12*

Nature forms the body of all manifest objects of whatever form and has three fundamental qualities in its manifest state, *Satva*—balanced purity, *Raj*—passionate activity and *Tam*—blind inertia. All objects sentient and non-sentient are an aggregate of these three, with one predominating which imparts to the object its distinctive character. God works Nature into forms by establishing systems of relations as explained before. In these systems predominates one or other of the three qualities which gives the system definite properties. In this aspect of the qualities also I am the abode of all objects, and also beyond.

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।  
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥  
दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।  
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ १४ ॥

*By these states made up of the three qualities  
this whole world,  
Fascinated does not know Me, the unmanifest  
beyond these. 13*

*This My Divine Maya, of qualities is hard to  
pierce,  
Those who take to Me, cross over this Maya. 14*

This universe of qualities is a manifestation of the Unmanifest Brahman. Himself without size and form

He pervades the entire Cosmos. This union of the Unmanifest and the Manifest, is a most extraordinary phenomenon which we listen to or see wonder-struck but find it hard to comprehend.

We find in nature also, formless energy in various forms (heat, light, electricity, magnetism) residing in material objects. In fact we cannot conceive of it without its base—a material object. Yet we cannot know the how and why of its inherence therein. Nay, we find it in operation in our bodies. We are not its originators; we are not even its initiators, for it was working in the body before we even knew that we had such a thing as a body or that it was a live active thing. Yet it is not the body and it appears to act to purpose. This union can only be due to the same category which is responsible for all this manifestation. The whole of this manifestation is founded in and moves in this union. *The wonderful play divine with which God first forms the aforesaid union and then manifests Himself in nature in the myriad forms comprising the universe is called Maya.*

Mortal men deluded by the tempting forms of three quality-existence which surround them on every side and which are food for their body-machinery, gyrate round and round, getting involved more and ever more in their anxiety to get happiness and joy out of them. But where is joy for the changeless in a sea of evanescence? He is ever being deceived, as the object of attachment and affection is hardly siezed that it changes form or loses value in the eyes of the faithless companion—body. For a self-deluded man this world is in reality a sea of pain and sorrow, but hoping against hope

he tries to snatch as much pleasure out of it as he can, because he is ignorant of the operator beyond. The ever shifting phenomena keep the self so busy with themselves that they leave him no time to draw in and reflect upon his true nature. He only knows himself to be a live, active body. He finds everything active within and without and the need for adjustment so great, the body-needs so incessant and imperative that he seldom concerns himself with the question "who causes this activity, whence this activity, what is its aim, what am I? what is my relation to this outside activity and why, who has given me the body so elaborate and so complicated and why?" Thus entangled in this net he is not able to look beyond and know Me the changeless who is responsible for it all. But those who acquire a distaste for objects of sense are filled with a keen desire to escape from the miseries of sense-enjoyments and begin to reflect upon God. They cut through this net and attain Me. The rest remain confounded in the magic spell of this *Maya*.

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढा प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।

माययाऽपहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥ १५ ॥

*The deluded evil-doers do not take to Me, and  
the vile men,*

*Deprived of knowledge by Maya, pinning faith  
in demoniacal disposition\*.* 15

### God Seekers

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।

आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ १६ ॥

\*Detailed discussion in Ch. XVI, Shs. 7-18.

*Four classes of right-doing persons worship Me,  
O Arjun,*

*The suffering, the seeker, the wealth-desiring  
and the knowing, O Bull of Bharats. 16*

**The Suffering**—One whose mind is so overborne with sorrow that sense-enjoyments do not attract or tempt him. The world of phenomena is for him an abode of pain and anxiety, unable to afford any peace or consolation. He therefore seeks refuge in the eternal all-merciful Father and prays to Him for peace and consolation.

**The Enquirer**—One who though moving in the world of sense has his moods of reflection, when he ponders over his self, the life-beyond, the creative Power behind the moving universe, and the nature of the same. He is troubled at the thought of how to conduct himself in the world. There is a void in his life. His enjoyment of the sense-world is half-hearted, he always feels that sense-joy is not the highest form of joy and that there is yet a joy unmixed with sorrow which is to be found within, but knows not how to attain it. He turns to the Supreme for guidance.

**The Seeker of Self-interest**—One who is moved by the three powerful *éshànàs*—cravings for son, wealth and fame, social position, i.e., desires, wife, children, wealth, and reputation amongst men, some high official position or enjoyments of heaven hereafter.

**The Knowing**—The man of knowledge, who is self-illuminated.

### *The Self-illuminated*

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।

प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।

आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥ १८ ॥

*Of these the knowing, ever harmonised and  
solely devoted to Me excelleth,  
For I am the dearest of the knowing and he is  
dear to Me. 17*

*Noble are they all, but the knowing is regarded  
as My very Self,  
Because he of tranquil mind is solely refuged in  
Me, the Highest Goal. 18*

**Nitya-yukt**—See Ch. VI, Shs. 8 and 18.

**Ekbhakti**—Unswerving devotion to the Supreme.

The knowing has realised the transitory nature of sense-objects and withdrawing his mind therefrom abides in his self seeking joy within (Chap. V, 24). He is also solely devoted to the Supreme. His whole being, cognition, volition and feeling is given over to Him, there is nothing left to disturb or distract.

Man is a composite of these three, we cannot conceive of him existing without any of these. They can only be separated ideally for purposes of reflection upon various aspects of the human personality. Any one of the three dedicated to God, without any attempt to bring in the other two would keep him bound to the world of sense and his sub-conscious would become the

arena of an internal conflict. An antagonism is set up between the god-bound and the world-bound elements, as can be easily apprehended by observing the daily life of those who pass of as pious and god-fearing. Human personality becomes the subject of alternate pushes of craving and greed and pulls of self-knowledge. While, if starting with anyone according to his mental and emotional make up, he harnesses the other two into co-operation with the god-bound by conscious effort, then success is sure. He attains the *Brahman-state*, which is the same however one starts. When body-affections are overcome and self-illumination dawns, the old memory-traces (*sanskārs*) and innate tendencies are dissolved away and there remains no purdah from the Supreme. In fact the reason why he is called "My very self" is because he refuses to leave the company of the Most High and gets rooted in Him, like a river which refuses to return back from the ocean.

It is quite obvious that according to Krishna, a true *gyani* is not one versed in theoretical learning only, but a *yogi* and *devotee* combined which means that true knowledge implies exclusive devotion to the Supreme and turning of the body into an instrument of Will divine in normal daily activity—a truly Brahman-like attitude in conscious waking life.

बहूनां जन्मनामंते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।

वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥१६॥

*At the end of many births the knowing comes  
to Me,  
Saying "Vasudeva is this All," such a mighty  
soul, is rare indeed.*



**Vasudeva\*** : The all-pervading Brahman. "I abide in all beings and so I am called Vasudeva." (Mah. Sh. Par. Adh. 341, Sh. 40).

**\*Uddalaka** asked **Yajnavalkya**. "Dost thou know that Inner-Ruler who within rules this world, the other world and all beings?" He replied. "He who abiding in the earth, water, fire, middle-regions (*antariksh*), air, heavens, sun, moon and stars, ether, darkness, and light, pervades them, whom they know not, but whose body they are, who from within keeps them bound to law, is the Inner-Ruler Immortal.

This is His relation to the Devas.

Next His relation to the Elements.

He who established in all Elements, pervades them, whom the Elements know not, whose body they are, who from within dominates them is the Inner-Ruler Immortal.

This is His relation to the Elements.

Next of his relation to the embodied-self.

He who dwelling in the vital air (*Prana*), tongue, eye, ear, mind, skin, knowledge and seed pervades them, whom they know not, whose body they are, who from within regulates them, is the Inner-Ruler, Immortal. Invisible He sees, unheard He hears, inconceivable He thinks, unknowable He knows. There is none who sees better than He, none who hears better, none who thinks better, none who knows better, He is the Inner-Ruler, immortal; all else is grief giving". Then *Uddalaka*, the son of *Aruna* became silent. (Br. Up. Adh. 3. Br. 7).

**Gargi** asked—

She said "what is above the heavens, what is beneath the earth, what is between heaven and earth and what is called past, present and future. On what is all this woven and rewoven?"

**Yajnavalkya** said—

"It is called by the knowers of *Brahman* the Imperishable Supreme, O *Gargi*, neither gross nor subtle neither small nor big nor red (like fire) nor mixed, shadow-less and devoid of darkness. He is neither air nor ether. He is alone, without taste or smell, with-

The knowing grows into full consciousness of the all-pervading nature of the Supreme, as described in shlokas 4 to 13 *supra*. To him the whole universe manifests His glory, the sapidity, sound, manhood, smell, heat, light, life, seed, reason, strength, desire, all, all. He sees Him everywhere and in everything. For him *Vasudeva* is all and all is *Vasudeva*. Such a man is a true *Yogi*. (Ch. VI. Shs. 29-31).

### . The Desire-ridden

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः ।

तं तं नियममास्याय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥२०॥

*Whose discrimination is enveloped by cravings  
they worship other Devatas,  
Engaging in prescribed ritual driven on by  
their nature. 20*

out eyes, ears, speech or mind. He is without glow, without breath, mouth and measureless. He has nothing within or without, partakes of nothing, nor does any one partake of Him. Under the supreme governance of this Indestructible (Being), O *Gargi*, the sun and the moon work in their assigned places.

Under the supreme orders of this Indestructible (Being), O *Gargi*, seconds, hours, days and nights, half-months, months, seasons and years occupy their assigned places. Under orders of this Indestructible (Being), O *Gargi*, the eastern rivers flow down the snowy mountains to the eastern quarters, the western to the western quarters. Whatever the direction of their flow, it is under His orders. Whoever departs from this world, without knowing Him is self-blind, one to be pitied. Whoever realising this Indestructible (Being), O *Gargi*, departs from this world, is a true knower of Brahman. This is that Imperishable Brahman, O *Gargi*, in whom Akásh (Ether) is verily woven and re woven." (Br. Upan. 3. Brah. 8).

[For definition and discussion of meaning of *Devata* see pages 115-18 *supra*.]

In sharp contrast with the man of knowledge (*gyani*), who views the whole panorama of nature as a manifestation of the Supreme and who always minds the underlying unity beneath seeming diversity, are those who are entangled in the meshes of desires. They live on the surface and regard apparent diversity as real. They notice particular desires being satiated by particular objects and so they look to the forces which fashion them as their *Devatas* for fulfilment of desires. Their attention is not rivetted to one entity only because of the diversity of their cravings which cannot all be satisfied by one particular entity. According to their limited knowledge and understanding they adopt the practices current to invoke those forces which in their view lead to the desired result.

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयाऽर्चितुमिच्छति ।

तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥२१॥

*Whatever body\* a devotee with faith wishes  
to worship,*

*His unswerving faith therein I render firm. 21*

Body (*Tanu*) is used here in the sense of *Devata*.

It is quite clear that *Tanu* can include almost any manifested form visible in nature, as the same is really a body of the Supreme Eternal. It all depends upon the knowledge and disposition of the particular individual what object he would treat as his *Devata* for the

time, to gain a particular end. According to the intensity of his craving, and strength of belief based on the experience or advice of those whom he trusts or reading of books on which he relies, he looks upon a particular manifestation of the Supreme, whether under a symbolic name like *Indra, Mahadeva, Vishnu, Varuna, Mitra, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kali* or natural name like Fire, Earth, Water, or Energy as the entity who would do the needful for him. As he bends all his energies to gain his end through that entity, his faith in the capacity of that entity to satisfy him is rendered firm.

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते ।

लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान् हितान् ॥२२॥

*He full of faith invokes that form.*

*And therefrom gains those desires which are*

*Me-granted. 22*

Imbued with this faith, he adopts the prescribed ritual or means to invoke his god for the time and moulds his conduct accordingly. If it so happens that all other factors which must combine together to bring about the desired result are brought in proper relation, he attains his object. But this consummation is neither in his hands, nor in those of his ideated god, but the Supreme, who alone controls and operates all factors necessary for fruition of desire, including his *Devata*. So ultimately whatever a man gets is really a gift from the Supreme, though to his carped vision a particular manifestation appears to be the donor deity.

अंतवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भक्त्यल्पमेवसाम् ।  
देवान्देवयजो यांति मद्भक्ता यांति मामपि ॥२३॥

*But the fruit to these men of petty  
understanding is unenduring,  
The votaries of the devas remain with them  
and My devotees come to Me. 23*

But satiation of craving as such is an impossible task, as there is no end to craving in the life of a man who is not rooted in the Divine. One is hardly satisfied that another occupies the field making an incessant demand for satiation. So there is always dissatisfaction with one's lot.

The votaries of manifested objects which lead to craving-satiation remain entangled in the network of nature. While those who view the Universe of objects as operated by Me, discard the particular and diving deep root themselves in the Power which moves the diverse objects, regard cravings as body-affections and giving them their due place lose attachment to them. They attain an even outlook and rising beyond the play of desire merge themselves in the Supreme.

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यते मामबुद्धयः ।  
परं भावमजानंतो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥२४॥

*The unwise regard Me the Unmanifest as  
Manifest,  
Ignorant of My supreme, limitless and peerless  
nature. 24*

The ignorant mistake particular forms operated by the Supreme for the Supreme Himself, who is really

Unmanifest, but operates all manifest objects by His Power. As they treat part as the whole, their knowledge is partial and incomplete which keeps them ever ignorant of Truth.

### The Delusion of Opposites

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।

मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥२५॥

*Enveloped in My Yoga-Maya I am not visible  
to all.*

*This deluded world does not know Me the  
unborn without limit. 25*

Screened off by this universe which is a manifestation of My might and majesty I am not visible to those who revolve round and round deluded within this fence, but to those alone who can pierce through the screen of *Maya* by knowledge of the essential truths and mould their life accordingly with inflexible determination and unwavering devotion, ever refuged in Me, the unborn Supreme Eternal.

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चार्जुन ।

भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन ॥२६॥

*I am aware of creatures gone and present,  
O Arjun,*

*And of those to come, but scarcely any knows  
Me. 26*

So fascinating is the effect of this play of qualities upon men, that seldom does any get to know Me. Not that the screen is thick, nay, it is very thin, almost

translucent, but tenuous and resisting. Every one during the course of his journey here gazes in blank wonder at times. A feeling of utter helplessness and presence of a mighty mysterious Power dominating us creeps over our being, but such moments are few. Again the illusory sense-objects prove more powerful and swamp the mind and understanding. We leave this mysterious Power to go its even pace in the universe unattended, but expect it always to be mindful of our welfare and well-being according to our erratic notions of joy and sorrow. So the cycle moves on, a bad recruiting ground for the sergeants of liberation.

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वंद्वमोहेन भारत ।  
सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यांति परंतप ॥२७॥

*By the delusion of opposites born of desire and  
aversion O Bharat,  
All creatures become confused at the time  
of Creation. 27*

When in the beginning of creation the souls assume body-forms, automatically there comes into operation the instinct of preserving the same and there springs up a desire for objects which help preservation and aversion to those having the opposite effect. This gives rise to the pairs of opposites, heat cold, pleasure, pain, joy and sorrow, success, failure, gain and loss, all referring to preservation of the body-form. The body makes the heaviest calls on our time and attention and becoming the dominant partner forces the self-partner to recede into the background, turning him into a slave. So the embodied self fascinated by this game of opposites

loses all power of discrimination. He forgets that what he so keenly desires, that the disagreeable should not linger in his experience must come to pass for its cause has change inherent in itself. Similarly his desire that the agreeable may last for ever can never be fulfilled, as body which desires this consummation is itself changing and with changing moods and emotions, the agreeable of the moment before becomes disagreeable of the moment present. The surrounding setting in which the self judges the object to be agreeable is itself a phenomenon evanescent, and with a change there, goes the agreeableness, leaving a feeling of void behind. His attachment or aversion to objects seen in the light of his body-needs makes no difference to the moving stream without which goes on its even course unaffected. But he by this ignorance gets mixed up with the passing phenomena and imprints on his sub-conscious a desire which to satiate itself becomes the cause of rebirth in the world.

येषां त्वंतगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्माणाम् ।  
 ते द्वंद्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥२८॥  
 जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये ।  
 ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमव्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम् ॥२९॥  
 साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः ।  
 प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः ॥३०॥

*But those men of righteous deeds whose sins  
 have come to an end,  
 They free of the delusion of pairs, worship  
 Me with firm resolve. 28*



*For liberation from decay and death, refuged*  
*in Me who strive,*  
*They come to comprehend Brahman,*  
*Adhyatma and Karma. 29*  
*Those who know Me along with Adhibhut,*  
*Adhidaiva and Adhiyajna,*  
*Of steadfast mind, continue to know Me at*  
*departure too. 30*

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु० ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगो नाम सप्तमोऽध्यायः

*End of Chapter VII . . . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*  
 YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM

## CHAPTER VIII

### Yoga of Imperishable Brahman

अर्जुन उवाच

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।

अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ १ ॥

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।

प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥ २ ॥

Arjun said—

*What is that Brahman, what is Adhyatma and  
what is Karma, O Purushottam?*

*What is called Adhibhut and what is  
Adhidaiva?*

*Who and what is Adhiyajna in this body,  
O Slayer of Madhu?*

*At the time of death, tell me how are You  
known by the self-controlled?*

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।

भूतभावोद्भवकरो विर्माः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥ ३ ॥

### The Lord said—

*The Imperishable Supreme is Brahman. The intrinsic nature is said to be Adhyatma. That, which causes the genesis and manifestation of sentient beings and non-sentient objects and also sustains them, the integrated cosmic activity in the form of a sacrifice is called Karma (action).* 3

**Adhyatma**—The intrinsic nature of an object whether sentient or non-sentient. The object as it really is in essence and not as it appears.

**Karma**—Considered as individual action it is his or its activity as offering into the total activity which brings about manifestation of objects for the use of the living.

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥ ४ ॥

*Perishable nature is Adhibhut, Purush  
Adhidaiva,*

*And I am Adhiyajna in this body,  
O best of the embodied.* 4

**Adhibhut**—The changing universe of the five Elements with all its objects large or small.

**Adhidaiva**—The Self, the director and enjoyer of the body.

**Adhiyajna**—The Sagun Brahman who presides over all sacrifices including the creation-cycle, who is the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities and whose manifestation this universe spread before us is.



He thinks of it alone and remembers nought else. If he departs from this body before its satisfaction, then his mental body (*karana sharira*) is permeated through and through with it and he incarnates in the next body with this complex of craving as the predominant trait of his life.

But though this resultant craving becomes the ruling factor determining his body activity, he is himself the author of it. He planted it in his sub-conscious and allowed it to germinate and grow till it assumed such proportions. He could as easily have planted any other craving instead.

Man therefore can always determine what his normal state of being is to be, as it is the resultant of the training which he has given to his senses, mind and reason and of materials which his activity has supplied to the sub-conscious. He has sought for happiness in the world without. He has identified himself with his body-chariot and made its needs his own. Instead of treating the body-needs as deserving his attention because of the necessity of keeping the machine in a state of high efficiency to facilitate his task of attaining the goal of self-realisation, he forgetting the end, has begun to live for them. He has mistaken the whole purpose of his existence.

Therefore if he realising his relation with the body and the capacity of the sense-world to yield him no more joy than that of satisfying body-needs, turns away from the world and looks for joy within in the company of his self and striving for self-illumination by constant reflection within and non-fruit regarding activity without, attains the Brahman-state wherein He

sees the Supreme everywhere and all in Him, then there will be no other craving left in him, but one for the sight and company of the Supreme Eternal. At the time of death too, He would vibrate in his consciousness, He would occupy his mind and so he will incarnate in Him, which means termination of birth-cycle.

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्ममिवैष्यत्यसंशयम् ॥७॥

*So at all times think of Me and fight.*

*Mind and reason dedicated to Me, thou wilt  
attain Me certain. 7*

As the predominant idea at death is what in normal life has occupied his attention most, Arjun is enjoined to dwell in the Supreme at all times, even when engaged in battle. The whole mental machinery should be dedicated to Him. By so acting he is undoubtedly bound to attain Him as that is the law. The predominant trait determines the future.

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।

परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचितयन् ॥८॥

*Proficient in the habit of meditation, mind  
unwandering elsewhere,*

*Dwelling in the Supreme Divine Self, O Parth  
he goes to Him. 8*

To attain the Supreme Divine Self one must give exclusive devotion to Him. Man cannot serve two masters. What man would deny that this changing world holds him in its grip with a vengeance. But this

is his own voluntary act. By a change of masters he can as effectively allow the Supreme to secure him for His company. But the field of activity for this consummation is within. The mind has got to be so trained as to hold fast to Him and allow no outside impressions in which there is the least tinge of selfish desire to sink into the sub-conscious. The whole activity is to be for the sake of the Lord. This is achieved by the continued practice of the Yoga of Equanimity. When he has achieved this, then at departure thinking of Him alone he would go to the Supreme.

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारमणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।

सर्वस्य धातारमचित्यरूपमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥ ६ ॥

प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन

भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।

भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्

स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥ १० ॥

*The All-knowing, the Ancient, Sovereign,  
Minutest of the minute who ever meditates*

*upon,  
The Sustainer of all, of Ineffable form, like the  
sun, beyond Darkness. 9*

*At the time of departure, with fixed mind,  
absorbed in devotion by Yoga power,  
Correctly gathering the life-breath between  
the eye-brows, he attains the Supreme*

*Divine Self. 10*

This is possible to one who has devoted all his life to the practice of Yoga and has gained complete con-

trol over his body and the flow of vital-breath (prana). In short who has thoroughly washed his sub-conscious of all impurities and traces of longing for sensual enjoyment.

### The Goal

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति

विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ।

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति

तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥ ११ ॥

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।

मूढन्यायायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥ १२ ॥

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।

यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥ १३ ॥

अनन्यचेताः सततं ये मां स्मरन्ति नित्यशः ।

तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥ १४ ॥

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।

नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥ १५ ॥

आब्रह्मभुवनल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।

मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥ १६ ॥

*Whom the Veda-knowers call the  
Imperishable, in whom the self-disciplined free  
of attachment enter,  
Desiring whom they observe, celibacy, that  
Goal I shall describe briefly.*



- Controlling all the gates, holding the mind in  
the heart,  
Fixing the life-breath in the forehead, in the  
state of Yoga. 12*
- Reciting the Monosyllable Aum—Brahman—  
thinking of Me,  
Who goes, casting of this coil, he attains the  
Supreme Goal. 13*
- With unswerving mind who constantly thinks  
of Me always,  
For him I am easy to attain, the Yogi ever  
desirous of union with Me. 14*
- Having attained Me, rebirth unenduring and  
abode of sorrow,  
The mighty souls, who have already obtained  
perfection, do not suffer. 15*
- Up to Brahma-region all regions involve  
rebirth,  
After attaining Me, O 'Kunti-born, there is  
no rebirth. 16*

When the Supreme is the only object the mind dwells upon, there is attachment to Him alone exclusively. He goes straight to Him. There are other regions of varying degrees beneath, for those who work for fruit and whose minds are engrossed in pleasures of the body however refined. They look for pleasure in objects without. Such people are involved in the cycle of birth and death to enjoy the fruit of their actions. But those who have gone beyond into Brahman-loka have no necessity to assume a body-form, as their whole action has merged in the total divine activity.

### Unmanifest Nature

सहस्रयुगपर्यंतमहर्षद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।  
 रात्रिं युगसहस्रांतां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥ १७ ॥  
 अव्यक्तादव्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।  
 रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥ १८ ॥  
 भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।  
 रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ १९ ॥

*Of a thousand Yugas is a Day of Brahma,*  
*who know,*  
*And of another thousand Yugas a Night of*  
*Brahma, they know day and night.* 17

*The unmanifest becomes all manifestation as*  
*the Day dawns,*  
*As Night falls it merges again into the state*  
*unmanifest.* 18

*That unmanifest becomes the aggregate of*  
*objects physical,*  
*Which disappear at Night-fall helpless and*  
*appear at dawn of Day.* 19

**Day of Brahma**—Period during which the creation cycle moves.

**Night of Brahma**—Period during which the universe remains in the unmanifest state.

**Night-fall**—Commencement of dissolution.

**Dawn of Day**—Commencement of creation.

### The Unmanifest Supreme

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।

यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥२०॥

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।

यं प्राप्य न निवर्तते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥२१॥

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।

यस्यांतःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥२२॥

*But apart from this Unmanifest there is  
another Unmanifest,  
Who when all these manifested objects perish is  
unperished. 20*

*The Unmanifest is Imperishable, so they say,  
He is called the Supreme Goal.  
Attaining which, people do not return, that  
is My supreme abode. 21*

*That Supreme Self is worth attaining by  
unswerving devotion,  
In Whom all objects abide and by Whom is  
this all pervaded. 22*

### The Two Paths

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्ति चैव योगिनः ।

प्रयाता यांति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥२३॥

*The time which involves returning or not-  
returning of the Yogis,  
Departing after death, that time I shall tell  
you, O Bull of Bharats. 23*

### Devayana Path

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षणमासा उत्तरायणम् ।

तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥२४॥

*Fire, light, day, moon-lit half, six months of  
the northern-circuit,*

*Shedding of the body by these the  
Eternal-knowing Yogis go to the Eternal. 24*

### Pitriyana Path

धूमो रात्रिस्तया कृष्णः षणमासा दक्षिणायनम् ।

तत्र चांद्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥२५॥

*Smoke, night, dark-half, six months of the  
southern-circuit,*

*By these attaining lunar light they return. 25*

शुक्लकृष्णो गतो ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते ।

एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययाऽऽवर्तते पुनः ॥२६॥

*Truly these Light and Dark are regarded as the  
eternal paths of this Cosmos,*

*By one, he attains the state of non-return and  
by the other he returns. 26*

Time is here used in the sense of path. There is a description of the two paths stated here, in the *Brahma Sutras* (*Vedanta Shastṛa*) written by the author of the *Gita*, as well as in *Chandogya*, *Brihadaranyak*, *Prashna* and *Kath Upanishads*. In all these there is no indication that the accident of time overrides the fundamental factors which determine the question of a Yogi's

return and non-return to earth, after death. Indeed the author of the Gita in his Vedanta Shastra Chap. IV, Sec. II, Sutra 17-20 discusses this question.

रश्म्यनुसारी (१७)

“Following the direction of the rays”. (17)

निशि नेति चेन्न सम्बन्धस्य यावद्देहभावित्वाददर्शयति च (१८)

“By night not this. No, objection not valid, because his connection with his work ceases with the body”. (18)

अतश्चायनेऽपि दक्षिणे (१९)

“Therefore for the same reason during the sun’s southern course also”. (19)

योगिनः प्रति स्मर्यन्ते स्मार्त्ते चैते (२०)

“These two are presented to the Yogis by Smṛti for their recollection”. (20)

The meaning is that the Yogi leaving the solar plexus follows the direction of the solar rays. And even though an enlightened self die at night he would attain Brahman because his sub-conscious having been denuded of all self-regarding traces, the moment his connection with the body ceases, there is no necessity whatever left of a body form, as there are no actions to fructify. The *Sṛuti* which condemns death at night applies only to the desire-ridden and the unenlightened and not the Yogi. There is no bar to a Yogi attaining Brahman if he dies in the southern solistice.

This however has no application to any but the

Yogis. It is clear therefore that here we are to understand Time and Path to be synonymous terms, as is evident from Shloka 27 itself. There are two paths which a Yogi after death follows, the Path of the Devas (*Devayana*) and the Path of the Ancestors (*Pitriyana*). The first is the path of Illumination and leads to liberation and the other the Path of self-regarding action which involves rebirth.

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥२७॥

*Knowing these two paths the Yogi is*

*undeluded,*

*So at all times be steadfast in Yoga, O Arjun. . 27*

A Yogi who by continuous practice of mind-control and non-fruit-regarding activity ever abides in his Self and has acquired an even outlook towards all beings and sees God manifested in all and everywhere, attains the Supreme. There is nothing left for such a one to assume a body-form again. But an individual who though practising self-control and aspiring after a noble life confines himself within the domain of three quality nature, acquiring only the *Satvic* State by making *Satva* predominate over *Raja* and *Tama*, attains the celestial regions to enjoy the fruit of his meritorious actions and as they exhaust returns again to earth. He moves bound by goodness. True it is, that it is goodness, but still it is a chain of bondage. Only a *gunateet* can escape from the thralldom of rebirth. Knowing the nature of the two paths and the consequences they lead to, a Yogi never loses his discrimination.

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव

दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।

अत्येति तत्त्वमिदं विदित्वा

योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥२८॥

*In Veda recitation, sacrifice, austerity, charity,  
whatever meritorious fruit has been declared,  
Appreciating it all, he jumps over and obtains  
the Supreme Primeval Abode. 28*

The Yogi with a mind well under control, carefully weighs the extent and nature of the joys accruing from scripture-reading, sacrifice, charity and austerity, and realising their transient nature is not fascinated by them, but soars beyond by devoting himself to non-fruit-regarding activity in the interests of world-harmony and attains God-consciousness by developing an even outlook towards all beings. Acting thus he on body-dissolution attains the Supreme Abode.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु० योगशास्त्रेऽक्षरब्रह्मयोगो नामाष्टमोऽध्यायः

*End of Chapter VIII. . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*

YOGA OF IMPERISHABLE BRAHMAN

## CHAPTER IX

### Sovereign Science and Sovereign Secret

श्री भगवानुवाच

इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूये ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽशुभात् ॥ १ ॥

The Lord said—

*Now I shall relate to thee, uncavilling, the  
Knowledge with wisdom knowing which thou  
wilt be saved from evil.*

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।

प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

*Sovereign Science and Sovereign secret of the  
utmost purity,  
Directly realisable, meritorious, easily practised  
and infallible.* 2

This profound science is easy and clear enough to understand, but cannot be grasped without direct comprehension by means of concentrated meditation. If what has been taught about the nature of the self and his relation with the body in Chapter II; the inner meaning and basis of human activity in Chaps. III and IV; the methods of control of body-activity in Chaps. V



and VI; the constitution of the universe of phenomena together with its relation to the Supreme in Chap. VII and some mention of that Power in Chap. VIII, is borne in mind, then there will be no initial difficulty in either understanding what is here a summation of the afore-said teaching about the Supreme or commencing the process of direct comprehension through meditation. It is just visualising vividly what has been taught, before the mind's eye with concentrated attention in a receptive attitude of perfect calm within.

अश्रद्धानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परंतप ।

अप्राप्य मां निवर्तते मृत्युसंसारकर्मणि ॥३॥

*Men without faith in this Truth, O Harasser  
of foes,*

*Not attaining Me follow the course of the  
birth and death cycle. 3*

There are two paths, one leading to the Unmanifest, resulting in peace everlasting and the other keeping man bound to *Sansár* (universe) with its alternations of joy and sorrow involving assumption of a body-form for enjoyment of same and return to earth in due course. The self is ever in quest of joy. But his estimate of it depends upon his state of knowledge. So long as he identifies himself with the body and treats its needs as his own, he regards their satiation as the source of true joy. Man therefore imbibes a rooted faith in the capacity of sense-objects to give him joy, and lives for their acquisition. All his activities are directed towards this end.

As long as man's being has as its basis a sub-conscious (*chit*) which is a store house of impressions of self-regarding activity which keep suggesting that the body is the self himself, ultimately saturating the whole being with this idea, he will have rooted faith in the sense-world as the alluring arena of his activities wherein to look for desired happiness, the hardest knocks and the keenest disappointments notwithstanding. And as man's faith is nothing but what he is, he having regard to the contents of his mind, cannot be expected to look for joy in a sphere which is the very antithesis of the sphere of his normal activity. There are no materials therein to lead him on to a different outlook. His being is not equipped for that path and therefore he is lacking in faith. With the body treated as his self, he cannot have moving faith in the oft repeated saying "dwelling in God is the source of true joy." He cannot conceive of it. This body cannot allow the embodied self to go beyond its source—Nature—and search for a joy-giving object of faith in the beyond. Only a man who treats the body—his vehicle for all purposes mundane or ultra mundane—as separate though most intimately associated with the self, can look upon body-needs, as the needs of a helpful companion in temporary association. Realising this when he sees the futility of looking for joy in the world of sense, his faith in the world of sense as the source of joy would be shaken, as in his being would have come into existence elements powerful enough to draw him away therefrom. The contents of his sub-conscious would acquire a new meaning. They would help him in drawing within and look for real joy there, as it is free from the

interminable play of changing nature, a flux where-with identifying, mortal man has failed to achieve his proper adjustment since the beginning of time. .

Such a man alone can have faith in this Truth, for he alone can conceive of a state of happiness in which body-affections of opposites like joy and sorrow, success and failure would be ineffective.

### The Supreme and Creation

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगद्व्यक्तमूर्तिना ।

मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥ ४ ॥

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।

भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥ ५ ॥

*This whole Cosmos is pervaded by My  
unmanifest form.*

*All manifestation rests in Me, not I therein.* 4

*I'm not the seat of the Manifest either, behold*

*My Divine Yoga,*

*Bringing forth beings and sustaining them, My*

*Self dwells not therein.* 5

Naturally so, because the seat of the Manifest according to our notions should itself be a Manifest. Yet no one so far has succeeded in seeing or sensing the Mover of this Cycle. If He exists at all, He must be Unmanifest, and unlike anything existing in manifest nature. If we postulate a Being who keeps the wheel revolving, we are face to face with this most wondrous phenomenon of the Unmanifest moving the manifest, an extraordinary attribute of this wonderful Being.

यथाऽकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान् ।

तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥६॥

*Just as the mighty wind moving everywhere  
ever abides in Akásh.*

*So the Manifest abides in Me, know ye this. 6*

Beyond the wind is boundless *Akásh* (Ether) wherein it inheres and moves. Its motion is perfectly free, we do not see it tied down in any way. There does not appear to be any limit in any direction whatever. Yet it is contained in it and is bounded by it. In this wind inhere all manifest objects, so *pari passu* in *Akásh*. Therefore the boundless Supreme who bounds the boundless *Akásh* is the abode of all and they move in Him as the wind moves in *Akásh*, free in action yet bound.

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यांति मामिकाम् ।

कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ॥७॥

*All objects, O Kuntiborn, disappear into*

*My Nature,*

*At the end of the Cycle, then, when the next  
begins, I create again. 7*

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।

भूतग्राममिमं कुत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥८॥

*Dominating my Nature I create again and  
again*

*This whole aggregate of objects, all helpless  
under the sway of Nature. 8*

न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ।

उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं , तेषु कर्मसु ॥६॥

*Those actions, O Victor of Wealth, do not  
bind Me,  
Sitting like the indifferent and unaffected and  
unattached to them.* 9

मयाऽध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।

हेतुनाऽनेन कौंतेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ १० ॥

*Under My supervision, Nature creates the  
moving and the unmoving,  
Owing to this, O Kunti-born, this world  
revolves.* 10

This universe is a huge revolving wheel, with an infinite number of smaller wheels revolving on their respective axes. There is a beginning and end to each of these individual cycles. There is the tiny living cell, taking a fraction of a second to dissolve. There! its cycle is over in so short a time. This at one end; at the other are organisms who live long years and then dissolve. That is the duration of their cycle. Similarly there is a period of existence of more or less duration for all individual objects. These manifest objects are components of the main cycle. While it exists and goes on revolving, the individual components are dissolving and again evolving. Even when an individual organism exists for the full duration of its cycle, we see change going on in its parts. The parts have their own cycle and are changing their components. Dead useless matter is eliminated and replaced by a fresh supply. So

what goes on in the macrocosm is also going on in the microcosm. Every object seems to be itself a system of cycles and in turn becomes the component of a larger cycle till we come to the parent cycle of all.

There is a *Pralaya* or finality to some cycle or cycles every moment, when considered as individual wholes; while as components of a larger one which yet moves, their extinction is ignored. Within the cycle this play of the non-manifest—manifest—non-manifest, goes on every moment of time. Nature is enacting this perpetual drama bound by laws which know no swerving, under the direction of the Supreme. Like finality to the existence of smaller wheels there is a period for the main wheel of the Universe. As in the case of the smaller ones, there is also an interval before reappearance. The same Power, with the same laws which rule the destiny of the smaller ones sets on its course the main Cycle. Thus is spread this motion in eternity, all contained in the being of the Eternal, its Supreme Cause. It disappears in Him and reappears in Him. All this eternal creative activity does not tinge the Creator as He is without form.

### The Deluded

अवजानंति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।

परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥ ११ ॥

*The deluded disregard Me residing in the  
human frame,*

*They are ignorant of My Supreme Nature—  
the Lord of the Manifest. 11*

"*Manusheem tanum asbritam*" here does not appear to denote the mortal frame in which Krishna was encased but a mortal 'human frame in which the Supreme always abides as in Sh. 18 of Chapter XVI: "In egoism, power, arrogance, passion, and anger pinning faith, these cavillers disregard Me abiding in their and others' bodies." Also "I am enshrined in the hearts of all." (Chap. XV, Sh. 15). "The Lord abides in the heart-regions of all beings." (Chap. XVIII, Sh. 61).

मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसाः ।

राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥ १२ ॥

*Of vain hopes, futile actions, futile learning  
and unthinking,*

*Of alluring fiendish and demoniacal natures  
possessed\*.* 12

### The Yogis

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।

भजंत्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

सततं कीर्तयंतो मां यतंतश्च दृढव्रताः ।

नमस्यंतश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥ १४ ॥

*The high-souled possessed of divine nature,  
O Parth, Me,*

*Worship single-mindedly, knowing Me the  
Imperishable and the Origin of beings.* 13

*Always extolling Me striving with firm  
 resolution,  
 Bowing with devotion, ever steadfast they  
 worship Me.* 14

### The Learned

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाऽप्यन्ये यजंतो मामुपासते ।  
 एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ १५ ॥

*Others performing Sacrifice of Knowledge  
 worship,  
 As the One and the Separate, Me the All-faced.* 15

The wise by constant reflection and scripture-reading see the One manifested as the many. For those who see Him manifested in every single object of the Universe, it becomes His manifestation.

### The Beneficent Supreme

अहं कतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाऽहमहमौषधम् ।  
 मंत्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥ १६ ॥

*I am Kṛitu, I am Sacrifice, I am Swadhā, I am  
 the herbs,  
 I am Mantra, I am Butter, I am Fire, I am the  
 act of Sacrifice.* 16

**Kṛitu**—Vedic Sacrifice in which a number of poles are fixed around and a pit dug in the centre where oblations are offered in the lighted fire by reciting *Vedic mantras*.

**Swadhā**—Offering in name 'of ancestors.



All elements necessary to complete a Vedic sacrifice are to be treated as manifestations of the Supreme. He is their ultimate Cause. They are all evolved from His lower nature, *Apara Prakriti* (Chap. VII, Sh. 4). Their particular forms are due to the bringing together of various elements into definite relations—the establishment of a system in equilibrium. This is the work of the Supreme Self as explained in Chapter VII.

पिताऽहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।

वेद्यं पवित्रमोकार ऋक् साम यजुरेव च ॥ १७ ॥

*I am the Father of this world, Mother,  
Sustainer and Grandsire,  
The pure Aunkar worth knowing and also  
Rik, Sam and Yaju. 17*

What functions these office holders perform for their human charge, the Supreme performs for all. This whole cycle has been set in motion for the good of sentient life (Chap. III, Shs. 10-16). He is the Supreme Self designated by the Mono-syllable Aum. He is the three Vedas, as they either treat of Him or of His manifestation—the moving Universe.

गतिर्मर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।

प्रभवः प्रलयः स्यानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥ १८ ॥

*I am the Goal, Sustainer, Lord, Witness,  
Abode, Refuge and Comrade,  
Origin, End, Stay, Storehouse and Imperishable  
Seed. 18*

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।

अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥ १६ ॥

*I give warmth, I sustain the rain and fall it,  
I am Life as well as Death, I am that which is  
and that which is not, O Arjun. 19*

**Whose Goal is Heaven**

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा

यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।

ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक-

मश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥ २० ॥

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं

क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।

एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना

गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥ २१ ॥

*Veda-knowers, Som-sippers, of sins purified,  
propitiating Me by Sacrifice, for  
Heaven-goal pray,*

*They attaining the holy region of Indra enjoy  
the celestial enjoyment of the Devas. 20*

*There enjoying the spacious heavenly region,  
on merit exhausting they come to earth,  
Thus the devotees of Vedic path desirous of  
enjoyments are involved in the  
go-return-circle. 21*

Those who perform Vedic sacrifice for fruit, remain bound to the wheel of nature and have to assume body-forms to enjoy the fruit of their actions. (Chap. II, Shs. 42-45).

### Whose Goal is Me

अनन्याश्चितयंतो मां ये जनाः पर्युपास्ते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥२२॥

*Unswervingly meditating upon Me, those who  
worship Me fully,  
For such abiding-in-Me persons, I acquire and  
preserve. 22*

The universe is His. Their body is His. It is His instrument for the self's individual contribution to the total activity which results in the production of objects to maintain all sentient life. All that is required for participation in this beneficent feast is selfless activity on behalf of God for world-harmony. This makes him a partner in the entire riches of the world. The real Actor—the Almighty—makes Himself responsible for the wherewithal of the body-engine. He who needs it may keep it. Such men are ever harmonised with the world. It is ever in need of such souls. It becomes His agent to honor itself by looking after them. They have nothing to lose because there is nothing they call their own. Indeed the very body becomes God's. They have no desire for acquisition, because they hold in their grip the Lord of the All. Their body is left to its ordained play in the Universe (*Sansár*). They work with Universal energy which guides their body and

determines the entire, play according to His requirements for world-harmony.

### Misguided Worship

येऽप्यन्यदेवताभक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः ।

तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥२३॥

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।

न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ॥२४॥

*Devotees of other Devas worshipping them full  
of faith,*

*Also worship Me, O Kuntiborn, in disregard  
of correct procedure. 23*

*As I alone am the Enjoyer and Lord of all  
sacrifices,*

*But they know Me not in truth hence fall. 24*

I alone am beyond Nature, all else it bounds, subjecting it to the play of the three qualities (*Gunas*). So whenever a man devotes himself to any other entity, it is always some manifest object sentient or non-sentient, within the orbit of the Universe which I pervade. I am abiding even within that entity. That entity if non-sentient is subject to unalterable laws as regards its function and man's devotion cannot have any effect one way or the other, it will go its even pace under My orders. So in expecting results from it he has so to harmonise his own activity with the activity of that entity that even while following its own course, it may become partner in a system along with other factors provided and brought into relation by the devotee himself, producing the desired result.\* Any other mode of

satiation having regard to the entity's assigned place in the cycle is out of the question.

If the worshiped is a sentient entity, then his activity is self-directed. It is either fruit-regarding or non-fruit-regarding. If it is non-fruit-regarding aimed at the benefit and welfare of all, then in order to gain benefit therefrom, the devotee would have to make his desire harmonise with the desire of all. His individual welfare would then merge in the universal welfare. But as his devotion was self-regarding initially he can gain nothing from the activity of such an entity. If that entity's activity is fruit-regarding, that is, not always with a view to the welfare of all, then fruition of the devotee's desire cannot be entirely in his hands. He is himself bound. All he can do is to act in the hope of realising his expectation, but the result would in fact depend on how far other factors over which he has no control are so set in the world without as to co-operate with his activity in securing it for him. So taking any point of view, fulfilment of the desire does not proceed from the activity of that limited entity (god), but from the Supreme under whose control he operates, and as he is only a minor manifestation of the Supreme, worship of him for fruit is really worshiping Him through a screen, an erroneous mode which keeps the devotee tied down to imperfection. He cannot rise above the play of *Gunās* (qualities) and the Supreme is beyond the *Gunās*. So he cannot know Him. He keeps whirling round on the Potter's wheel (*Sansār*). He forgets that I the Supreme Self am the enjoyer of all offerings of devotion and worship and not My particular manifestation in nature.

यांति देवव्रता देवान् पितृन्यांति पितृव्रताः ।

भूतानि यांति भूतेन्या यांति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥ २५ ॥

*The devotees of Devas go the way of Devas,  
of Ancestors go the way of Ancestors,  
Worshippers of Elements the way of Elements,  
and My worshippers come to Me. 25*

The essence of all true devotion is self-surrender. The devotee by making the worshipped object his ideal contemplates it as possessing attributes. He opens his being to the influence of this ideal, thereby gradually permeating it with the same. The devotee gradually transforms himself into the nature of the ideal as he sees it. His being gradually adopts an outlook on life in accord with it, because his sub-conscious constantly receives the impressions surcharged with the meaning given to them by this ideal. If the ideal has a nature essentially *Tamasic*, e.g., the elements then he too becomes *tamasic*—self-blind and inert. If the ideal is *Rajasic*, e.g., ancestors, he follows their footsteps and subjects himself to alternate currents of joy and sorrow and a feeling of dissatisfaction and void. If the ideal is *Satvic*, e.g., the *Devas* (Vedic gods) then he imbibes the *satvic* disposition. His activity is directed to securing those objects which are essentially good and lead to moral and mental uplift and happiness here and hereafter. But all the three classes of worshippers remain chained to the world of sense. It is only by tearing off the purdah of the three qualities, by withdrawing the mind from the world and rooting it in the Supreme beyond the qualities, that man can attain Him. Those who withdrawing thus, exclusively devote them-

selves to the Supreme beyond, attain Him on the same principle, for by opening their being to His influence, they gradually imbibe His nature.

What kind of ideal a particular individual would be satisfied with depends upon his mental and moral make up. It gives him a distinct disposition, with definite yearnings and desires and tendencies to be tempted or fascinated by sense-objects of a particular description. He instinctively finds himself in quest of an agency by the aid of which he could satiate them and enjoy true happiness. This agency incarnates his ideal of happiness and becomes his god. It is *Tamasic*, *Rajasic*, *Satvic* or *Gunateet*, in accord with his own nature and tendency. The short comings of the ideal reproduce themselves in the being of the devotee, as no one can lift himself beyond his ideal.

### True Worship

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।

तदहं भक्त्युपहतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥२६॥

*A leaf, flower, fruit or water who offers Me  
with devotion,*

*That offered as it is with devotion, by the  
pure-hearted I accept. 26*

O Arjun! make thy heart pure, and offer all that thou owneth and calleth thine to Me with true devotion. Value and volume matter not. Poverty is no crime. No matter if it be a leaf even, let alone fruit and flower, nay, let it be an article possessed by all, the water in thy jar. Even that is enough to endow thee with the self-illuminating virtue of *aparigraha* (non-pos-

session). Offered in that attitude, if thou possessest nought, nought will be accepted. Not until this attitude is attained, would thou devote unswervingly to the Supreme. Desire for possession would distract thee. It will claim thy devotion too. It will force thee to worship the world of sense. This means a gulf between us, the two, who verily are so close, so near each other. So keep whatever thou hath, as My property as custodian thereof for Me, for the use of the living. Then there will be nothing left to distract thee.

As regards the body itself, which is thy companion till death, My teaching is as follows:—

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

यत्तपस्यसि कौतेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥२७॥

*Whatever thou doeth, eateth, offereth or*

*giveth,  
And whatever body-suffering thou endureth,  
that dedicate to Me. 27*

Every single body-activity whatever its nature should be dedicated to Me. Body should be treated as My gift given to thee to enable thee to experience the truest of true joys, the joy of serving Me. If thou doth that, thou art a true conqueror. Thou wilt have nought left to strive for.

शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्षये कर्मबन्धनैः ।

संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥२८॥



*Thou shalt be liberated from the bonds of  
 action in the form of good or bad fruit,  
 A self steadfast in the Yoga of Renunciation  
 and liberated, reaches Me. 28*

The body of a true worshipper, a real devotee as it is totally surrendered to the Supreme does neither good nor evil for him, but acts for the Supreme. When all activity whatsoever is dedicated to the Supreme, there is no desire for fruit left, and it ultimately leads to release from the trouble of enduring good and bad fruit. The devotee merges in Him. Such a man though acting with the body has really renounced all action mentally. He does not treat himself the doer: "Dedicating all actions to the Supreme who acts without attachment He is untainted by sin like water on lotus leaf." (Chap. V, Sh. 10). He becomes a true *Sannyasi*, a renouncer of action even though he be leading the life of a householder, and finally attains the Supreme.

### Attitude Towards Beings

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।

ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥२९॥

*I am the same to all creatures, none is hateful  
 or dear to Me,  
 Those who worship Me with devotion, are in  
 Me and I in them. 29*

Whether one is devoted to God or not, He abides unconcerned in all. "The Lord is seated in the heart-regions of all." He has an even outlook towards all, no favour on some and frown on others. Fascinated by the temptations of the pleasures of sense, people are

oblivious of His presence within. But even though ignored He is ever by their side as their friend and comrade, as if they were His devotees. He supports and sustains all—caviller, and devotee. If any distance seems to separate Him from man, man's is the responsibility. One given over to sensual enjoyments, who has no time for reflection within, is not aware of His Presence or Proximity. While he who has turned away from the evanescent joys of the changing world and is illumined within, seeks refuge in Him abiding within. He knows Him to be nearer to himself than his own body. It is the non-devotee who creates a wide gulf between himself and the Supreme by his erroneous attitude and not that the Supreme forsakes him annoyed at his sins. He who devotes himself exclusively to Him, soon realises His presence within himself.

### Who allowed to Worship

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।  
 साधुरेव स मन्त्र्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥३०॥  
 क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छांतिं निगच्छति ।  
 कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥३१॥  
 मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।  
 स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यांति परां गतिम् ॥३२॥  
 किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।  
 अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥३३॥

*Even if the greatest evil-doer worships Me,  
 as an unswerving devotee,  
 He should be regarded a good man, because he  
 has rightly resolved.*

*Soon he becomes a virtuous self and attains  
 enduring peace,  
 Know ye this, O Kūnti-born, My devotee,  
 is never lost.* 31

*If Me, O Parth, treat as refuge even of evil  
 wombs,  
 Women, traders and menials, they attain the  
 highest-state.* 32

*Not to say of pure Brahmins, devoted kingly  
 sages,  
 Gaining this fleeting joyless world, ye devote  
 to Me.* 33

All are entitled from the most sinful to the most righteous. There is no exclusion on grounds of colour, caste or creed. But the proper method of approach has to be adopted. Exclusive, unswerving devotion to the Supreme is the paramount requisite. This transformation takes place when there is a change of attitude towards the body and the sense-world. When it dawns upon the self, that the body is his chariot and that the world of phenomena exists only to minister to its needs alone, he turns away from it in quest of a quarter for himself, which he finds within. Then he surrenders the self to the changeless Supreme and totally unconcerned with his charge—body—treats it as His instrument gifted to him for His own purpose. In this attitude, the body, giving up all self-regarding activity, exists for the service of all. The self becomes “*dharmatmā*” as he acts only according to *dharmā*, which is preservation of world-harmony. He attains peace because desire for sense-objects, the enemy

of peace within, has yielded place to desire for union with the Supreme. There is nothing left to distract or destroy his peace. True it is that the course of life for him is no bed of roses. It is both rough and smooth. But all this affects only the body which he has already dedicated to his Maker. So intent on Him he does not lose his balance, but acts in the spirit of Chap. II, Sh. 14: "These contacts of matter, O Kuntiborn, heat, cold, pleasure, pain do give. Ever changing, transient, them doth thou bear, O Bharat."

### The Untouchable

Even the greatest evil doer is not so bad, as to influence the Supreme to deny him shelter and his body not so polluting as to provoke Him into not abiding therein. Nay, so great is His glory that he has promised His companionship—the highest gift, one to which the vainest of the twice-born aspires, and in feigned search for which, he an ignorant slave to the mud-case (body) protects it from the *Pariah* brother's polluting touch.

What an improvement upon the attitude of the Maker! How strikingly original! The Maker promises him uplift on change of mental outlook. But the socially well placed (*kripāna*) "self-blind" (Chap. II, Sh. 49), "thief" (Chap. III, Sh. 12) "eater of sin" (Chap. III, Sh. 13) "ignorant," "doomed" (Chap. III, Sh. 32), proud of his wealth and caste label ever engaged in self-regarding pursuits, out to exploit whomsoever he may catch hold of in the service of his supreme master and lord—the holy structure of bread, butter, water and salt—will have none of it. Inner motive matters not, inner purity avails not, the accident of a womb is the

all-inclusive absolutely conclusive ground for shunning him, and saving the holy lord from the polluting touch of the *pariah* frame, wherein abides the common Sustainer of both—the Imperishable Eternal. He balanced, despite the tyrannising heartlessness of this perpetually altering bag of bread and water, called the twice-born, ever comforts and consoles him by a clarion call through Arjun: **“Know ye this, O Kuntiborn, My devotee is never lost.”**

Q.—What kind of devotees?

A.—“The greatest evil doer,” “women” “merchants,” “Shudras” (menials) anyone “even of an evil womb.”

Q.—What do these gain?

A.—The highest state, so says the Lord.

But no. What does it matter if the Lord says so. The Lord may do what He pleases after his *Pariab* devotee has been gathered to his forbears, but during his sojourn here, the human cattle will receive his just and merited due from the Lord’s *brabmin devotee* at least so long as he swears by *his* Lord and does not escape from his torments into the refuge of more humane and less vain devotees of the very Lord, only going down before Him under a different label.

The Lord however not heeding the frail narrow-minded swelled head—his unruly, cavilling, twice-born, pseudo devotee, who will not listen however great the divine retribution on his community and country and whatever his miseries, social, moral, economic or political—has pointed the way to attain the Goal. Man with

promise of a glorious end is enjoined to worship the Supreme.

### Mode of Worship

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

. मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥३४॥

*Be of My mind, My devotee, My worshipper,  
and bow to Me,*

*By thus abiding in the Self, Me thy goal, thou  
wilt attain Me. 34*

Mind is to become His property, His the only thought; feeling to be exclusively at His disposal, for He alone is the object of devotion; activity for Him, for He alone is to be worshipped and given obeisance. The whole being of man should be surrendered without reservation.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु ० राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोगो नाम नवमोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter IX. . . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*  
YOGA OF SOVEREIGN SCIENCE AND SOVEREIGN SECRET

CHAPTER X  
Divine Glories

श्रीभगवानुवाच

भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।  
यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥ १ ॥

**The Lord said—**

*Listen again, O mighty-armed to My supreme  
word,  
Thou art delighted with it so desiring thy  
welfare I shall speak.* 1

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः ।  
अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥ २ ॥  
यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।  
असंमूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

*Neither the hosts of the Devas know My  
origin nor the Sages,  
I am the origin of Devas and Sages in  
every way.* 2  
*Who knows Me unborn, beginningless and  
Supreme Lord of the Universe,  
He undeluded amongst mortals is freed of  
every sin.* 3

### Qualities of Beings from Me

बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।

सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च ॥ ४ ॥

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।

भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥ ५ ॥

*Reason, knowledge, non-delusion, forgiveness,  
truth, restraint, serenity,*

*Joy, sorrow, birth, death, fear and courage, 4*

*Non-violence, evenness, contentment,  
austerity, benevolence, good or bad name,*

*All these manifold qualities of beings arise  
from Me alone. 5*

### The Progenitors

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।

मद्भावा मानसा जातां येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥ ६ ॥

एतां विभूर्तिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

सोऽविकंपेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥ ७ ॥

*The seven Maharishis of old and the four*

*Manus  
Were born of My nature and mind, whose  
creatures these worlds are. 6*

*He who comprehends the essence of My  
manifestations and Yoga Power  
Is linked in steady union with Me without  
doubt. 7*



**Seven Mahrishis\***—Mahat or Universal Understanding, Ahankar or Universal Egoism and the five Tanmatras of which the five great elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether are gross forms. In Puranic terminology these have been symbolised and given human names. But there is great diversity of opinion as regards the names in different Puranas. They are as follows:

- |              |                |                 |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Bhrigu.   | 1. Marichi.    | 1. Kashyap.     |
| 2. Nabh.     | 2. Angiras.    | 2. Atri.        |
| 3. Vivaswan. | 3. Atri.       | 3. Bharadwaj.   |
| 4. Sudhama.  | 4. Pulastya.   | 4. Vishwamitra. |
| 5. Virja.    | 5. Pulah.      | 5. Gautam.      |
| 6. Atinama.  | 6. Kritu.      | 6. Jamdagni.    |
| 7. Sahishnu. | 7. Vashishtha. | 7. Vashishtha.  |

That these Rishis could not really be the progenitors of the present creation is obvious from the fact that *Praja* here includes all sentient creation and not human beings only.

**Four Manus\***—Individual *manah* (mind), *chit* (sub-conscious), *buddhi* (reason), and *ahankar* (egoism). These too have been symbolised in Puranic theology and given human names. Here again as is natural in all symbolisations there is great diversity of opinion as regards them.

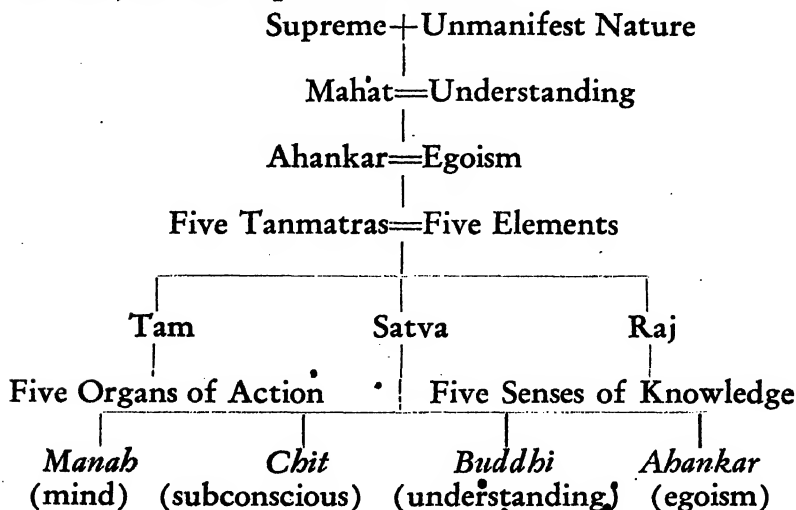
The first group represents the base of the Macrocosm as a whole and the second represents the base of particular individuals (microcosm) which together make up this boundless universe of sentient life.

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\*Tilak's Gītarahasya, P. 751

A connected reading of shlokas 6 and 7 with reference to context makes it clear that no human Rishis are alluded to here. Here the Lord is talking of the impersonal attributes of sentient life as such, which He says is His manifestation and a product of His Yoga Power.

**Madbhava, Mansa**—Unmanifest Nature cannot evolve itself into myriad objects *suo motu*. They are products of the union of the field and Knower of the field who is none else than the Supreme (Chap. XIII, Shs. 26, 30). This wondrous capacity of uniting with the field is ever present in the nature of the Supreme as a potentiality. When He makes it active by His thought, He uses Unmanifest Nature—the storehouse of all thought (*sankalpa*). So all particulars have their origin in the nature (*bhava*) and mind (Unmanifest Nature) of the Supreme as follows:



### The Knowing Deyotee

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।  
 इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥८॥  
 मच्चित्ता मदगतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।  
 कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥९॥  
 तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।  
 ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयांति ते ॥१०॥  
 तेषामेवानुकंपार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।  
 नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥११॥

*I am the origin of all, from Me is the unceasing  
 activity of the whole,  
 So thinking the wise full of loving  
 consciousness worship Me. 8*  
*Of My mind, life devoted to Me, mutually  
 enlightening one another  
 And always talking of Me, they feel  
 satisfaction and true joy. 9*  
*To them, self-abiding and worshipping Me  
 with love,  
 I give Buddhi Yoga by which they attain Me. 10*  
*Out of favour for them I the ignorance-born  
 darkness  
 Dwelling in their being destroy by the glowing  
 light of knowledge. 11*

### Arjun's Adoration

अर्जुन उवाच

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।  
 पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदवमजं विभुम् ॥ १२ ॥  
 आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिर्नारदस्तथा ।  
 असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥ १३ ॥  
 सर्वमेतद्वत् मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव ।  
 न हि ते भगवन्व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ॥ १४ ॥  
 स्वयमेवात्मनाऽऽत्मानं वेत्स्य त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।  
 भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥ १५ ॥  
 वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।  
 याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥ १६ ॥

Arjun said—

*You are supreme Brahman, supreme Goal,  
 supremely pure.  
 Eternal Divine Self, primal, unborn, and  
 all-pervading God 12*  
*Are You called by the Rishis, deva rishi Narad,  
 Asit, Deval and Vyas. You also say the same  
 to me. 13*  
*All this I regard as true what Ye tell me,  
 O Keshov,  
 Your form know neither the gods nor  
 demons. 14*

*O Supreme Self, You alone know Yourself by  
 Yourself,  
 Creator of elements, Lord of beings, God of  
 Devas, and Ruler of the universe\*.* 15  
*You alone are fit to describe Your celestial  
 glories,  
 By which glories pervading all the world You  
 therein abide.* 16

Rishi: a holy sage of disciplined mind and senses.

Dev-Rishi: a divine sage more highly evolved than a Rishi.

कथं विद्यामहं योगिस्त्वां सदा परिचितयन् ।

केषु केषु च भावेषु चित्योऽसि भगवन्मया ॥ १७ ॥

\*The author of the Gita represents Arjun as if he did not follow the teaching clearly and could not understand the significance of the use of the first person singular by Krishna. So he takes the speech as literally true which it could not be for obvious reasons. Arjun says that the attributes of the Divine have been sung before by several Rishis and Krishna also speaks of the same attributes as inherent in himself. The meaning here cannot be that the *Rishis* named had sung of the glories of Krishna as if they were aware that the individual who bore that name was an incarnation of Divinity with all his attributes because it was not so in fact, but that they had sung of attributes which characterised the Supreme and these Krishna was appropriating to himself by using the first person singular. Arjun is represented as putting the two together. This however does not appear to have actually been the attitude of Arjun on the spot. There is no convincing evidence in the preceding sections of the Mahabharat to support the view that he or any other prince or sage known to him regarded Krishna as the Supreme Brahman. The whole conduct of Arjun before and after the war seems to negative it. As to his mode of address after the war see page 188, *supra*.

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।

भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ॥ १८ ॥

*How shall I ever meditating know You,  
O Yogi,  
In what different aspects should You be  
meditated upon by me\*? 17  
In detail Your Yoga and Glory, O Janardan,  
Recount again, for me is there no satiety in  
listening to this nectar. 18*

\*In the shlokas which follow Krishna gives a description of His manifestations in compliance with Arjun's request to know the various aspects in which he is to meditate upon Him. In this section the most important mythological figures—legendary or symbolic—mentioned in the Puranas have been introduced. The setting of the picture in which particular objects have been marked out and characterised as His manifestation in a larger degree than others of their kind is wholly at variance with the rest of the teaching where (*samata*) equanimity of attitude and outlook towards everything and everybody is emphasised as the one distinguishing attribute of the Supreme and the same is held up as the highest ideal for a man who wants to escape from the bondage of action and attain liberation. This section does not add to our knowledge of the Supreme except perhaps to the extent that a devotee who contemplates Him in action may feel more impressed with His operation in some objects real or legendary than in others because of some feature therein which strikes his imagination. But what would strike his imagination more is entirely a matter personal to the devotee and determined by his emotional make up. The whole description would be superfluous after shlokas 6 to 12 of Chapter VII, but for the question in Shloka 17. But the true principle of meditation has been pointed out at great length in Chapter VI, specially Shlokas 29 to 31 wherein the whole essence has been given in unambiguous language. In the following Chapters too the matter has been discussed, e.g., Chapter VII, Shlokas 6 to 12 and 19; Chapter VIII, Shlokas 7 to 14; Chapter IX, Shlokas 17 to 19. The

श्रीभगवानुवाच

हंत ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।

प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यंतो विस्तरस्य मे ॥ १६ ॥

**The Lord said—**

*Now I shall relate My celestial glories,  
The striking ones, O Best of Kurus, there is  
no end to the description of all in detail. 19*

### Divine Glories

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।

अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामंत एव च ॥ २० ॥

true mode of worship and meditation is laid down in Chapter IX, Shloka 34.

Meditation in any of the forms suggested in this section could only give him a very partial view of the nature of the Supreme. It is not a mode dear to Krishna. He regards it misguided worship, Vide Chapter VII, shlokas 20 to 24, and Chapter IX, shloka 23. He commends the worship of Chapter VII, shloka 19 and Chapter IX, Shloka 34.

Then Arjun is made to make this request for his future benefit. But all we know is that after the battle was over he lived in his famous palace as a good old friend of Krishna on the footing of ordinary human relationship. There is neither meditation in the aspects described here nor deportment one would expect from Arjun towards one whom he had adored as in Shlokas 12 to 16 above.

Equanimity of outlook is described as the root and essence of true freedom and the one fundamental characteristic of Brahman in Chapter V, Shlokas 18-19. And in this section the Supreme gives the go-by to this principle by selecting one out of each species as the more fortunate recipient of His might and majesty than the rest independently of his own action,

*I am the Self, O Gudakesh, abiding in the  
within of all beings,  
I am the origin, existence and end of all  
beings. 20*

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुर्ज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान् ।

• मरीचिर्मस्तामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥२१॥

*Of the Adityas I am Vishnu, of luminous  
orbs the sun,  
Of the winds I am Marichi, of Nakshatras  
the moon. 21*

**Adityas\***—Twelve months of the year, so called because they take every thing with them as they pass along. In Puranic symbolism they have received the following names: Dhata, Mitra, Aryama, Rudra, Varuna, Bhaga, Surya, Vivaswan, Pusha, Savita, Twashta, and Vishnu. Of these Vishnu is the chief.

**Marichi**—The chief of Winds.

**Nakshatras**—Twenty-seven days of the lunar month on which the moon is visible.

वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।

इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥२२॥

*I am Sama Veda of the Vedas and Vasava of  
the Devas,  
Of the senses I am mind and of living beings  
the intelligence. 22*

\*Varun is the chief of the Adityas according to Chhan. Up. Sec. 3, Kh. 8, Sh. 1.



**Sama Veda**—It is sung as hymns in worship of the Supreme.

**Vasava**—Indra.

रुद्राणां शंकरश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।

वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ॥२३॥

*Shankar of the Rudras, Vittesha of the  
Yakshas and Rakshasas,  
Of the Vasus, Fire and Meru of the mounts  
am I. 23*

**Rudras\***—Ten kinds of vital air and the mind, so called because they cause grief to all as they depart from the body. In the Puranas they have been symbolised as follows: Virbhadra, Shankar, Girish, Ajaikpat, Bhuwanadhishwar, Ahirbhuja, Pinaki, Aparajit, Kapali, Sthanu and Bhaga. Of these Shankar is regarded as the chief.

**Vittesha**—Also called Kuver, the lord of wealth.

**Yaksha**—Brothers of Kuver.

**Rakshasas**—Beings of strength and power.

**Vasus\***—Earth, water, fire, air, ether, sun, moon and stars, and the heavens. These are so called because they comprehend the entire universe within them. In Puranic symbolism they are called: Apah, Dhruva, Soma, Dhar, Anila, Anala, Pratyusha, Prabhasa. Of these Anala or fire is the chief.

**Meru**—The highest of the seven mountain peaks, a reservoir of all riches.

\*See p. 116, *supra*, for fuller discussion. According to Chhan. Up., Sec. 3, Kh. 7, Sh. 1, Indra is the chief of the Rudras.

पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।

सेनानीनामहं स्कंदः सरसामस्मि सागरः ॥२४॥

*Of the priests, O Parth, know Me the chief  
Brihaspati,*

*Of army-chiefs Skanda and of  
water reservoirs the ocean. 24*

**Brihaspati**—The chief priest of the Devas.

**Skanda**—The principal general of the hosts of the Devas.

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्येकमक्षरम् ।

यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्यावराणां हिमालयः ॥२५॥

*Of the great Rishis Bhrigu, of words the  
mono-syllable Aum,*

*Of sacrifices the jap-sacrifice and Himalaya of  
the unmoving am I. 25*

**Bhrigu**—A great sage, reputed to be the son of Brahma the Creator.

**Himalaya**—The largest mountain in the world.

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः ।

गंधर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥२६॥

*Of trees the Ashvattha, of the divine sages  
Narada,*

*I am Chitraratha of the Gandharvas and Kapila  
the Silent of the Siddhas. 26*

**Ashvattha**—Pipal tree, the whole universe has been compared to this tree in the Scriptures (Chap. XV, Gita). It is regarded as a sacred tree.

**Narada**—A mighty name amongst Hindu sages.

**Gandharvas**—Celestial singers.

**Chitraratha**—The chief Gandharva.

**Kapila**—The author of Sankhya Shastra, one of the profoundest of thinkers.

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।

ऐरावतं गर्जेंद्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥२७॥

*Of the horses know Me Uchchaishrava born of  
ambrosia,*

*Of the lordly elephants Airavat and of men  
their king am I. 27*

**Uchchaishrava**—The charger of the Sun born when the gods and demons churned the ocean.

**Airavat**—The elephant of Indra born at the churning of the ocean along with Uchchaishrava.

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।

प्रजनश्चास्मि कंदर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥२८॥

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।

पितृणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥२९॥

*Of the weapons I am thunderbolt, and*

*Kamdruk of the cows,  
Kandarp of the progenitors and Vasuki of the  
serpents am I. 28*

*I am Anant amongst snakes and Varuna*

*of water-beings,  
Aryama of the Pitris and Yama amongst  
controllers. 29*

**Kamdruk**—The cow of the great sage Vashishtha which was supposed to fulfil all desires, born along with Uchchaishrava and Airavat from the ocean.

**Kandarpa**—Cupid or *Kamadeva*.

**Vasuki**—The king of hoodless serpents.

**Anant**—The king of hooded snakes.

**Aryama**—King of departed ancestors, a functional name of the Supreme in the Vedas (p. 118, *supra*).

**Yama**—The first and principal element of *Ashtanga Yoga* commonly called the Yoga of Patanjali which deals with the control of mind-action (*Yogash chitta vritti nirodha*).

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम् ।

मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥३०॥

*I am Prahlad of the Daityas and Time of the  
Reckoners,  
Of the animals their king and Vainateya of  
birds am I. 30*

**Prahlad**—A scion of the family of Ditti. He was a supreme example of fearless faith in the Supreme. His father king Hiranyakashyap, blinded by power and wealth, laid claim to God-hood and directed him to worship him as such. On his refusal he was ordered to be killed by drowning, that failing he was hurled down a mountain. When the father was unsuccessful there also, he resolved to kill him himself and tied him to a pillar of his palace to behead him. The pillar however suddenly burst and the Supreme in the guise of a lion

killed the king on the spot and saved his unswerving infant devotee.

**Vainateya**—Eagle (*Garūr*), the king of birds used by Vishnu for riding.

पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।

म्षाणां मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥३१॥

*Of the moving I am wind and Rama amongst  
warriors,  
Of fishes the shark and of springs the Ganges  
am I.* 31

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।

अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥३२॥

*Of the worlds I am the origin, middle and end,  
Of all sciences the science of Reality and of  
debators the argument.* 32

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वंद्वः सामासिकस्य च ।

अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताऽहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥३३॥

*Of letters I am A and the link of all  
compounds,  
I am everlasting Time the all-faced Sustainer.* 33

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमुद्भवश्च भविष्यताम् ।

कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मैवा धृतिः क्षमा ॥३४॥

*I am all-enveloping Death, and Prosperity of  
the would be prosperous,  
Of women fame, prosperity, speech,  
memory, intelligence, constancy and  
forbearance am I.* 34

बृहत्साम तथा . साम्नां गायत्री छंदसामहम् ।

मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहम्तूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥३५॥

*Of Saina hymns I am the Brihat-Sama and of  
meters the Gayatri,  
Of the months I am Margashirsh, of seasons  
the flowery. 35*

N.B.—For Brihat-Sama and Gayatri see p. 364.

**Margashirsh**—The temperate month of the year.  
Also in those days it was the first month of the year.

द्युतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।

जयोऽस्मि व्यक्सायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्वतामहम् ॥३६॥

*I am the gambling of the cheat and glow of  
the impressive,  
I am victory, I am effort, and purity of the  
pure. 36*

**Gambling**—It turns kings into paupers and paupers kings in the twinkling of an eye. And the cheat who makes merry over his success finds his riches a chain of misery round himself in his turn. All this is a manifestation of My power.

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पांडवानां धनंजयः ।

मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥३७॥

*Of the Vrishinis I am Vasudeva, of the  
Pandavas Dhananjaya\*,  
Of the silent sages Vyās, of truth-knowers  
Ushana the knower. 37*

\*Arjun alert and inquisitive to understand every thing properly as indicated by his question about Krishna having taught Yoga to Vivasvat in the beginning of creation quietly receives the

**Vrishinis**—The clan of the Yadavas to which Krishna belonged.

**Pandavas**—The five brothers—Arjun, Bheem, Nakul, Sahadeva and Yudhishtir, sons of king Pandu.

**Dhananjaya**—Arjun.

**Vyas**—A sage of profound learning and piety, author of the Gita, Vedanta Shastra and the Mahabharat.

information that Krishna was Arjun amongst the Pandavas and Vyas amongst the silent sages. Now if Arjun could be certain of anything it was of his and Vyas's existence as individuals separate from Krishna. What was the meaning of this astounding declaration? Arjun seeks no information, no question is asked, why not? Was it because the position was so simple or was it because it was never put to Arjun in that form? As Vasudev, Krishna had come with a mission. He gives the occasion and circumstances when he has to do this (Ch. IV, Shs. 7, 8). What was his position as Arjun and Vyas? Three incarnations at the same time, of these, two actually facing each other and living on two entirely different planes (Pages 17 and 37 *supra*).

It is no answer to say that the main object here is to emphasise that Krishna is seen best in the best of each species or group. What is the criterion of the best? Amongst the Pandavas there was Yudhishtir the eldest brother reputed to be king of Dharma and in the family there was Bhishma the unconquerable hero of a hundred battles. Why was Arjun selected and the other branch ignored altogether though Bhishm was there. The author Vyas had no special reasons to exclude him or the Kurus or for that matter Drona from the privilege of being noticed by Krishna in His manifestations. May the reason not be that much was not thought of the defeated heroes as after all they were siding with wrong, and because of the author's reverence for Krishna and the majesty and sublimity of the teaching, Arjun was considered to be a singularly lucky man as its recipient and therefore better than Yudhishtir. Vyas on this view comes in as the lucky chronicler of the conversation.

**Ushana**—Shukrācharya, the preceptor of the Daityas.

दंडो दम्भ्यतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।

मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥३८॥

*Of the chastisers I am sceptre and policy  
of the ambitious,  
Silence of the secrets and knowledge of the  
knowing am I. 38*

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।

न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान् मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥३९॥

*What of all beings is the seed that am I,  
O Arjun.  
There is no object moving or unmoving  
existing without Me. 39*

नांतोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।

एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ॥४०॥

*There is no end of My celestial Glories,  
O harasser of foes,  
This is just a succinct account of some  
details. 40*

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।

तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽशसंभवम् ॥४१॥

*Whatever being of glory, prosperity and power  
exists,  
That ye know to be a product of a part of  
My Energy. 41*



अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन त्वार्जुन ।

विष्टम्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥ ४२ ॥

*But what would you do knowing all this,*

*O Arjun\*,*

*I abide within and sustain this whole universe  
with but a part of Myself. 42*

**Brihat-Sama**

१२ १ २२ ३१२ २२ ३१२

[२३४] त्वामिद्धि हवामहे सातौ वाजस्य कारवः ।

३१२ ३ १२३ २३ २३ ३ १ २

त्वां वृत्रेष्णिन्द्र सत्पति नरस्त्वां काष्ठास्वर्वतः ॥ साम ३ । २ ॥

ऋ० ४ । ४६ । १ ॥

O Indra, in all our activities to gain wealth, food-stuffs and knowledge we actors meditating on Thee, invoke Thee. When face to face with difficulties we remember Thee, O Lord and Protector of the good. The men of knowledge to fix the direction and course of objects in motion think of Thee alone.

**Gayatri**

It is a Vedic meter, it derives its name from the following celebrated hymn—

भूर्भुवः स्वः । तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि ।

धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥ यजु० ३६ । ३ ॥

May we contemplate the supremely excellent, sin-destroying, all-purifying energy of the Resplendant One, who is all that was,

\*If that was the view of Krishna where was the necessity of this detailed description. Was it not in answer to Arjun's question? If the question was not proper why was it answered at all? The last shloka does not quite fit in with Krishna's attitude towards the question in the beginning when He at once became ready to answer it.

is or shall be, and the beyond, who pervades the three regions (universe) and the forces operating therein, who is all knowledge, who sustains the creation in health and plenty, who is the Creator of this universe and moves it bound by His Law, that He may direct our understandings along the path (which leads to the Supreme Goal).

**Aum:** (i) This word or sound expresses the Supreme Brahman.

"*Aum*, this syllable is all this. What is past, present or future is nothing but *Aum*. What is beyond is also nothing but *Aum*. All this (comprehended by *Aum*) is a manifestation of the Supreme. This Brahman has four aspects:

1. His first aspect is *Vaishvanara*—Controller of the waking state—the manifest world of physical objects. This is represented by the letter A of the *Aum*.
2. His second aspect is *Taijasa*—Controller of the dream-state—the astral world. This is represented by the letter U of the *Aum*.
3. His third aspect is *Prajna*—Controller of the sleep-state—the mental world. This is represented by the letter M of the *Aum*.
4. His fourth aspect is the whole undivided *Aum*, beyond the above three, i.e., beyond nature, imperceptible, indefinable, indescribable, inconceivable, undifferentiated, blissful and without duality. The *Aum* so meditated upon is the Supreme Self alone. He enters this Supreme Self with his self, who thus knows, who thus knows" (Mandukya Upanishad).

(ii) *Aum*, this word the Udgith should be adored.

Earth constitutes the essence of all substances, water that of the earth, the herbs of water; man forms the essence of all herbs; and speech is the essence of man. Rig Veda is the essence of speech, Sama Veda that of Rig Veda and Udgith that of Sama. The Udgith (*Aum*) is the quintessence of all these essences. It is the Supreme, the most Adorable (Chhan. Upan. Ch. 1, Shs. 1-3).

(iii) The adorable One whom all the Vedas meditate upon, whom all the austerities point to, desiring to attain whom men

lead a life of continence and self-control (brahmacharya) that I (Yama) now proceed to relate briefly. This is the sound *Aum*. This is the Supreme (Brahman)... Comprehending this one gets all one desires. This is the best refuge, this is the highest support. He who understands this is honoured in the region of the liberated (Brahman-Loka). (Kath. Up., Ch. 1, Valli 2, Shs. 15-17).

**Bbub, Bbuab, Suab:** Verily *Bbub* is this earth, *Bbub* is the interspace, *Suab* is the heavens. Verily *Bbub* is fire, *Bbub* is air, *Suab* is the sun. Verily *Bbub* is Rik (Rig Veda) verses, *Bbub* is Sama (Veda) verses, *Suab* is Yaju (Yajur Veda) verses. Verily *Bbub* is Prana (upgoing breath) *Bbub* is Apana (descending breath) *Suab* is Vyana (pervading breath). (Taitre. Upan. Shiksha Valli, Anuvak 5).

	Regions	Forces	Knowledge	Life
<b>Bbub</b> =	Earth	Fire	Rik Verses	Prana
<b>Bbuab</b> =	Interspace	Air	Sama Verses	Apana
<b>Suab</b> =	Heavens	Sun	Yaju Verses	Vyana

**Savituh**—Creator and Operator of the Universe.

**Varenyam**—Supreme; worthy of being attained.

**Bhargah**—Sin-destroying, all-purifying energy.

This is the most powerful and the most comprehensive Vedic hymn for purposes of meditation by man. It is the holiest hymn, the hymn *par excellence* of the Vedas. Its meaning has been considered in Chhandogya Upanishad, Chapter III, Section XII, and Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, Chapter V, Brahman 14.

### Chhandogya Summary

All this Creation is *Gayatri*. *Gayatri* is speech, as speech speaks of creation and protects and preserves it. *Gayatri* is earth, which sustains all that exists. The whole creation constitutes the glories of *Gayatri*. The Supreme is mightier than it. This whole manifestation is His one foot, the other three are contained in His Immortal Self. This Supreme who is indicated in the *Gayatri* is all-pervading, omniscient and eternal. He who understands *Gayatri* thuswise attains full and unending prosperity.

### Brihad Aranyak Summary

*Gayatri* has four feet, each of eight syllables. Earth, interspace and heavens are its first foot. Who thuswise knows the first foot of *Gayatri* conquers the three regions (universe).

The three Vedas are its second foot. Who knows this conquers all that is to be gained by Knowledge. *Prana*, *apana*, and *vyana* are its third foot. Who knows this conquers all that lives. The fourth foot of the *Gayatri* is the Resplendent Supreme who illumines this manifestation from above. Whoever knows this shines with greatness and glory.

This *Gayatri*, which in its three feet comprehends all that exists, all that is to be known and all that breathes, is refuged in its fourth foot, which though visible as the illuminator of this universe is beyond everything. This foot rests in truth which rests in energy and energy is life. So this *Gayatri* rests on what is the true essence of life. It preserves and protects life (vital organs) and because it protects vital organs=*gayas* (*gayans trāteté*=*Gayatri*) it is called *Gayatri*. It preserves the life of him to whom it is taught.

Thus is *Gayatri* praised: O *Gayatri*, thou art of one foot, of two feet, of three feet and of four feet. Thou art of no feet as thou art unknowable (in toto). Salutation to thy fourth foot, the Resplendent One, who illumines the three worlds from above. After reciting this if anyone who knows makes this invocation against one who is his enemy "may that enemy not attain that fruit", or that "his wish may not be fulfilled", without doubt his wish remains unfulfilled, or "he may say that he may obtain a particular fruit."

### Manu

"The most exalted Creator milked out this *Gayatri* from the three Vedas. He who repeats it daily for three years unwearied attains the Supreme Brahman, moves free like air and becomes subtled-bodied like *akash* (all-enveloping space)." (Ch. II. Sh. 82.)

*Gayatri* repeated while reflecting on its meaning as explained above, brings the devotee face to face with the majesty, omnipotence, omniscience and beneficence of the Supreme. He is lifted into an elevated mood as he contemplates the Supreme as *Bhub*,

*Bhuab*, *Suab*, and *Savitub* and earnestly prays for illumination and direction of his reason along the true path. Being himself a spark from the Divine (Ch. XV, Sh. 7), he becomes painfully conscious of the fetters he has imposed upon himself by wrong notions about himself and his chariot—body. He therefore anxiously strives for sublimation and expansion of his sense-activity. His reason becomes more and more refined and subtle. His knowledge expands and becomes deeper. He feels the energy of the Supreme pulsating within him and he no longer regards himself a sack of clay without a future but a self ever in intimate contact with the mighty reservoir of supreme energy. His prayer is for purification of his reason and its guidance to the Goal, which is the Supreme. He desires union with Him, which is possible only when he has conquered the universe of three qualities and gone beyond it (Ch. VII, Sh. 14). In other words his bid is for mastery of all that exists, all that is knowable and all that lives. To go beyond it all, is to attain His attributes and merge in Him as there is nothing beyond nature but He.

*Gayatri* is supreme power, the devotee reflecting upon its meaning meditates upon Him and treats himself as an eddy attracting supreme energy from the boundless ocean he is immersed in till his consciousness expands and he realises that the energy active within his body which he wrongly treated as his own is a portion of the infinite energy operating the whole Cosmos. He mentally breaks the fetters of his body and attains god-consciousness. To him his body activity is no longer the blind doubting movements of his physical organs conscious of their limited and finite capacity, but the certain, confident operation of a machine worked by One who is all power and all knowledge for a definite beneficent purpose—world-harmony (*Loksangrah*).

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु० विभूतियोगो नाम दशमोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter X . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*  
YOGA OF DIVINE GLORIES

## CHAPTER XI

### Vision of The Universal Form

अर्जुन उवाच

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।  
यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ॥ १ ॥  
भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।  
तत्तः कमलपत्राद् माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

**Arjun said—**

*Out of kindness this supreme secret known as  
Adhyatma—  
The discourse by Thee delivered has destroyed  
my delusion. 1  
The origin and dissolution of beings have been  
heard by me in detail  
From Thee, O Lotus-Eyed, also Thy unending  
majesty. 2*

**Adhyatma—**The teaching about the constitution of the universe, the attributes of the Manifest Supreme and their relation inter se, described in Chapters VII, VIII, IX and X.

एवमेतद्यथाऽऽत्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।

द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमेश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥ ३ ॥

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।

योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥ ४ ॥

*It is as You have declared, O Supreme Lord.*

*I desire to see Your form as Ishvara,*

*O Spirit Supreme. 3*

*If you consider it is possible for me to see it,*

*O Lord of Yogas, You show me Your*

*Universal form. 4*

Arjun desires an ocular demonstration of the operation of Supreme Energy in the myriad sentient and non-sentient objects of nature as described in the last four chapters.

### The Universal Form

श्रीभगवानुवाच

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।

नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतोनि च ॥ ५ ॥

पश्यादित्यान्वसूनुद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।

बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत ॥ ६ ॥

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।

मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद्द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥ ७ ॥

The Lord said—

*See, O Parth, My forms in hundreds and  
thousands,*

*Of manifold heavenly varieties and shapes  
and colours various. 5*

*Behold the Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, Ashvins  
and Maruts,  
And many never-seen-before wondrous forms,  
O Arjun. 6*

*Behold the universe of the moving and the  
unmoving collected together  
In My body, O Gudakesh, and all else you  
desire to see. 7*

Arjun is shown the entire universe of phenomena as an emanation from the Supreme and operated by Him.

### Gift of Divine Vision

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।  
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥८॥

*But you are unable to see Me with your  
normal vision,  
So I bestow on you divine vision, behold My  
Sovereign Yoga. 8*

Such a scene is not something which can be seen with physical eyes. It requires a supreme flight of imagination in a mood of calm concentration. When the mind is wholly undistracted by any idea, then bringing before the mind's eye various incidents of the phenomenal world bit by bit and keeping them in consciousness by will power, until the whole picture of how the totality of objects in the universe moves is drawn, gives an idea of the might and majesty of the Supreme. The completeness of the picture depends upon the degree of mental comprehension of the operation of diverse



objects of nature and concentration. It is a picture visible to the inner sense. Bestowal of divine vision here means inviting of exclusive attention to the operation of Supreme Power in all objects large or small in the form of a vision before the mind's eye and rivetting of attention thereto. A powerful Yogi who can control thought waves can project these in a suitable medium and draw a picture of the wondrous working of the Supreme in the world, in his mind.

Who would not admit that if the entire universe in action could be projected on a screen, he would see at the same time thousands taking their last breath, as many preparing for it, a large number in the act of being born and as many being conceived? He will see birth existence, death, joy, sorrow, hope, disappointment, gain and loss side by side, all emanating from a single source and referred by the persons concerned to the same source. He will see the operation of jealousy, envy and hate on the one hand and love, compassion and forbearance on the other, in the same breath. The motion and effect of stars and other objects of considerable size can be brought before the mind's eye according to one's knowledge. It is an expansion of consciousness and drawing a picture of all one knows and sees of things in actual experience by a supreme effort of concentrated attention. When the whole picture so drawn is contemplated as operated by the Supreme, the operation of the Power is described in terms of human organs of action and senses of knowledge through which energy is displayed in the human body. It is a picture based on analogy, interpreting the universal operation in terms of the operation of a human body, as that is the only

way in which men can be given an idea of it in a form intelligible to them.

संजय उवाच .

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन् महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।

दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥ ६ ॥

अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।

अनेकदिव्याभरणं दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥ १० ॥

दिव्यमाल्यांबरधरं दिव्यगंधानुलेपनम् ।

सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवमनंतं विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ ११ ॥

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।

यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ १२ ॥

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।

अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पांडवस्तदा ॥ १३ ॥

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोभा धनंजयः ।

प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृतांजलिरभाषत ॥ १४ ॥

Sanjaya said—

So saying, O king, the supreme Lord of

Yoga, Hari

Showed to Parth His Supreme Divine forms

9

Of mouths and eyes numerous of many scenes

wondrous,

Of wonderful ornaments, holding many

weapons wondrous,

10

*Wearing heavenly garlands and garments,  
annointed with heavenly scents,  
All wonderful, resplendant, infinite and  
all-faced. 11*

*If in the sky the light of a thousand suns  
shone together,  
It would scarcely approach the brilliance of  
that Mighty Being. 12*

*There collected together, the whole universe  
divided in ways manifold,  
Pandava saw in the body of the God of Devas. 13*

*Then awe-struck with hair on end,  
Dhananjaya,  
Bowing his head to the resplendant One with  
folded hands spoke. 14*

### Arjun's Vision

अर्जुन उवाच

पश्यामि देवांस्तत्र देव देहै  
सर्वास्तथा भूतविशेषसंघान् ।

ब्रह्माण्मीशं कमलाशनस्य-  
मृषींश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान् ॥ १५ ॥

अनेकबाहूदरक्वत्रनेत्रं  
पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनंतरूपम् ।

नातं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादि  
पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥ १६ ॥

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च  
 तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।  
 पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद्  
 दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥ १७ ॥

**Arjun said—**

*I see the Devas, O God, in Thy body and  
 assemblage of all other beings,  
 Brahma the lord on lotus seat and all the sages  
 and celestial serpents. 15*

*I see Your boundless form all around  
 with manifold arms, bellies, mouths and eyes,  
 Neither Your end nor middle nor beginning  
 do I see, O Lord of the universe, of universal  
 form. 16*

*With diadem, mace and discus and a mass of  
 light shining all around  
 Do I everywhere see You difficult to look at  
 blazing like unto the dazzle of fire-formed  
 sun, immeasurable. 17*

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं  
 त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।  
 त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता  
 सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥ १८ ॥  
 अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्य-  
 मनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।  
 पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशक्वत्रं  
 स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥ १९ ॥

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमंतरं हि

व्याप्तं स्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वाः ।

दृष्ट्वाऽद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं

लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन् ॥२०॥

*You are the Supreme, Imperishable, worthy to  
be known,*

*You are the supreme Refuge of the universe,  
You are the undying Guardian of the eternal*

*Dharma,*

*The Ancient Being, such is my conviction. 18*

*Without beginning, middle or end, of infinite  
power,*

*Of countless hands and eyes like unto the sun  
and moon,*

*I see You with a mouth like burning fire,*

*Warming the universe with Your heat. 19*

*The space between heaven and earth certainly*

*Is pervaded by You alone, as all the quarters,*

*Seeing this Your wondrous awful form*

*The worlds are trembling, O Mighty Being. 20*

### The Supreme Centre

अमी हि त्वां सुरसंघा विशन्ति

केचिद्भीताः प्राङ्गलयो गृणन्ति ।

स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसंघाः

स्तुवंति त्वांस्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः ॥२१॥

रुद्रादित्या वसवो, ये च साध्या  
 विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।  
 गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसंघा  
 वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे ॥२२॥  
 रूपं महत्ते बहुक्वत्रनेत्रं  
 महाबाहो बहुबाहूरुपादम् ।

बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं  
 दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाऽहम् ॥२३॥

*These groups of Devas are indeed entering  
 Thee,  
 Several full, of fear with folded hands extol  
 Thee,*

*Saying hail! groups of Sages and Siddhas  
 Praise Thee with splendid hymns. 21*

*The Rudras\*, Adityas\*, Vasus\*,  
 and the Sadhyas<sup>1</sup>,  
 Vishvas<sup>2</sup>, Ashvins<sup>3</sup>, Maruts<sup>4</sup>, Ushampas<sup>5</sup>,  
 Hosts of Gandharvas<sup>6</sup>, Yakshas<sup>7</sup>, Asuras<sup>8</sup>  
 And Siddhas are looking at Thee*

*awe-struck all. 22*

\*See page 116 footnote and page 355.

<sup>1</sup> A class of Devas of whom Brahma is the chief. <sup>2</sup> Ten Devas, who in Vedic times were regarded as protectors of human beings and givers of plenty to them, were called guardians of the world. Their Puranic names are as follows: Kritu, Daksh, Vasu, Satya, Kama, Kal, Dhvani, Rochak, Adrāva, and Pururuva. <sup>3</sup> Two Aswini Kumars born of Prabha (Light) daughter of Tushta and the sun. They are physicians of the Devas. <sup>4</sup> A class of Devas representing forty-nine kinds of winds. <sup>5</sup> Ancestors. <sup>6</sup> Celestial singers. <sup>7</sup> Brothers of Kuber, the lord of wealth. <sup>8</sup> Demons.

*Thy immense form of mouths and eyes  
 numerous,  
 O Mighty-armed, and of arms and feet  
 innumerable,  
 And bellies and manifold frightening teeth,  
 Seeing, the worlds are terror-struck and I.* 23

### Arjun Trembles

नमःसृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं  
 व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।  
 दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितांतरात्मा  
 धृतिं न विंदामि शमं च विष्णो ॥२४॥  
 दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि  
 दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसंनिभानि ।  
 दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म  
 प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥२५॥

*Touching the sky shining in many colours  
 Of wide open mouths and large shining eyes  
 Seeing Thee, my heart trembles,  
 Neither self possession nor calm do I see in me,  
 O Vishnu.* 24

*Thy mouths of terrifying teeth,  
 Seeing like Time-fires,  
 I recognise not the quarters nor find refuge,  
 Be pleased, O Lord of Devas and Abode of the  
 Universe.* 25

*Time—Consumer of all that is manifest.*

### Doomed Kuru Heroes

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः

सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसंघैः ।

भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ

सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः ॥२६॥

क्वत्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति

दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि ।

केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु

संहस्यन्ते चूर्णितैस्तमांगैः ॥२७॥

*These sons of Dhritrashtra*

*And all groups of princes,*

*Bhishma, Drona, the son of Sut and*

*Many of our own principal warriors*

26

*Are hastening into Thy mouths,*

*Fearful and of terrible teeth.*

*Several hanging from teeth-gaps,*

*Are seen with heads crushed to powder.*

27

### Other Warriors

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽबुवेगाः

समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति ।

तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा

विशन्ति क्वत्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति ॥२८॥



यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतंगा

विशंति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः ।

तथैव नाशाय विशंति लोका-

स्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः ॥२६॥

लेलिह्यसे असमानः समन्ता-

लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।

तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं

भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो ॥३०॥

*Like unto the torrents of rivers*

*Flowing towards the ocean,*

*The brave warriors of the world, Thy*

*Mouth flaming from all sides enter.*

28

*Just as moths into the blazing fire*

*Rush headlong to destruction,*

*So to destruction these creatures*

*Rush into Thy mouths 'with awful force.*

29

*With mouths blazing on all sides,*

*Devouring all men You are licking Your*

*tongue,*

*Filling the whole universe with heat*

*Your fierce rays are burning it, O Vishnu.*

30

Arjun is now seeing all these warriors whom he did not desire to kill hastening to destruction. What delusion could he now have for them? What ground could there be to avoid battle which had the sanction of the Supreme? In this vision he is seeing the warriors, generals and all rushing to death. This was their ordained end, why worry about the inevitable? There could be

no sin in killing such men for a cause deemed just by the Supreme.

### Arjun's Puzzle

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्रहूपो  
नमोऽस्तु ते देवर् प्रसीद ।

विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवंतमाद्यं  
न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥३१॥

*Tell me, who You are of form so dreadful,  
Obeisance to Supreme God, be pleased,  
I desire to know You Primal Being,  
As I do not understand this Your doing.* 31

### Krishna's Mission

श्रीभगवानुवाच  
कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो  
लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।

ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे  
येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥३२॥

**The Lord said—**

*I am Time, Mighty Destroyer of these  
worlds,  
Come into being for their destruction.  
Even without thee they shall not live,  
These warriors posted in the army opposite.* 32

### Assurance of Victory

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व

जित्वा शत्रून्मुञ्च राज्यं समृद्धम् ।

मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव

निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥ ३३ ॥

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च

कर्णं तथाऽन्यानपि योधवीरान् ।

मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा

युद्धयस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् ॥ ३४ ॥

*So get up and win fame*

*And defeating the enemy enjoy prosperous  
kingdom,*

*They have been already killed by Me,*

*Be thou just the pretext,*

*O left-handed-arrow-shooter. 33*

*Drona, Bhishma and Jayadrath,*

*Karana and others, valiant warriors,*

*Kill them already killed\* by Me, do not*

*tremble,*

*Fight, you will vanquish the enemy in battle: 34*

\*This information is vouchsafed to blind Dhritrashtra by Sanjaya before battle. Yet though so alarming, there is no suggestion in the Mahabharat that any steps were taken to appraise Duryodhan of it, a very extraordinary thing when regard is had to the anxiety of Dhrit to avoid battle if possible. It would seem

Whatever doubt remained in Arjun's mind should have been set at rest by Krishna's answer to Arjun's query in shloka 31. It is made clear beyond doubt that those by killing whom he apprehended enjoyment of blood-stained feasts were men doomed to die under divine dispensation. His doubt as to complete victory is set at rest in certain language "fight, you will vanquish the enemy in battle". This assurance is given by one whose adoration he sings in the following shlokas.

संजय उवाच

एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य

कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।

नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाऽह कृष्णं

सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ॥ ३५ ॥

Sanjaya said—

*Hearing these words of Keshav,  
The Crested, trembling and with folded hands,  
Having bowed, spoke to Krishna,  
Choked and full of fear, having bowed again. 35*

to show that it was not communicated to Dhritrāshtra in the form in which it is put down here. The Kurus were fighting because Duryodhan and his party were convinced of their success. It would have been only right and proper, nay, natural for his loving father to communicate what he had heard from Sanjaya to his son to bring him to a reasonable frame of mind if possible.

## Adoration

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या  
 जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।  
 रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति  
 सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसंघाः ॥ ३६ ॥  
 कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन्  
 गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।  
 अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास  
 त्वमक्षरं सदसत्तत्परं यत् ॥ ३७ ॥  
 त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराण-  
 स्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।  
 वेत्ताऽसि वेद्यं च परं च धाम  
 त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥ ३८ ॥  
 वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशांकः  
 प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।  
 नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः  
 पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥ ३९ ॥  
 नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते  
 नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।  
 अनन्तवीर्याऽमितविक्रमस्त्वं  
 सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः ॥ ४० ॥

**Arjun said—**

*It is meet, O Lord of senses, that in Thy*  
*praise*  
*This world revels and rejoices,*  
*The Rakshasas frightened fly into all directions*  
*And, the groups of Siddhas Thee salute.* 36  
*And why should they not bow to Thee,*  
*O Mighty Being,*  
*Teacher and Primal Cause of Brahma even,*  
*O Infinite, Lord of Devas and Abode of the*  
*Universe,*  
*You are the Imperishable, Manifest,*  
*Non-manifest and the Beyond.* 37  
*You are Primal God and Ancient Being,*  
*You are the supreme Abode of this world,*  
*The Knower worth knowing and Abode*  
*Supreme,*  
*O You of countless forms is this world by You*  
*pervaded.* 38  
*Air, Fire, Death, Varun, Moon, Creator,*  
*And Grand-sire are You,*  
*Obeisance to You a thousand times,*  
*Obeisance to You again and again.* 39  
*Obeisance to You from front and back,*  
*O all-faced, obeisance to You from all around,*  
*You are of energy infinite and power,*  
*And pervade all, therefore are You the All.* 40  
*Varun—god of water-beings.*

### Arjun Craves Forgiveness

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं

हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।

अजानता महिमानं तवे

मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि ॥ ४१ ॥

यच्चाञ्जहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि

विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु ।

एकोऽथवाऽप्यचुत तत्समक्षं

तत्त्वामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ॥ ४२ ॥

पिताऽसि लोकस्य चराचरस्य

त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।

न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो

लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभावः ॥ ४३ ॥

तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं

प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।

पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः

प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥ ४४ ॥

*Regarding Thee as a friend, whatever hath  
been reluctantly said,  
Like, O Krishna, O Yadava, O friend,  
Not knowing this Thy majesty,  
Whether in ignorance or in affection.*

*And however insulted in fun,  
 While at play, sleeping, sitting or eating,  
 Alone, O Changeless or in company,  
 For that I crave forgiveness from Thee,  
 O Inconceivable. 42*  
*You are the Father of this world—the moving  
 and unmoving,  
 Of it You are the Adored, its greatest  
 Breceptor.  
 Your equal exists not, how then Your  
 superior,  
 In the three worlds, O of Matchless Power. 43*  
*Therefore prostrating the body and saluting,  
 I please Thee, the adorable Lord.  
 Like as father his son and friend his friend,  
 You who are dear to me are worthy to  
 forgive me Your dear. 44*

Arjun after seeing this Universal form of Krishna becomes cognizant of his divine nature. He seeks forgiveness for his past familiar conduct by pleading ignorance as an excuse. This makes it quite clear that up to that time Arjun was not aware of the divine nature of Krishna. But could it be likely, if it were so? For it has to be remembered that Arjun besides being his relation was a life-long friend of Krishna.

### Show Your Old Form .

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा

भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे ।

तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं

प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ ४५ ॥



किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्त-

मिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।

तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन

सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥ ४६ ॥

*I rejoice at seeing what had not been seen'  
before,*

*But my mind is uneasy with fear,  
O God, show me the same form,  
Lord of Devas and Abode of the Universe. 45*

*With diadem, mace and discus in hand as  
before,*

*Do I want to see You, Be pleased.  
Of the same four-armed form.  
Be, O of thousand arms, of Universal form\*. 46*

\*According to this Arjun was familiar with Krishna as a four-armed individual in ordinary daily life. This was a feature so extraordinary that it was bound to attract the notice of everyone. It is strange that Arjun took no serious notice of it and continued the treatment indicated in Shlokas 41-42 above. It is not at all clear why he should have felt surprised and asked Krishna to tell him how he taught Yoga to Vivaswat in Chapter IV, Shloka 5. It is curious that this strange peculiarity did not strike terror in the heart of King Shishupal when he questioned Bhishma's proposal to make Krishna president of the Rajasuya Sacrifice, or that of Duryodhan and his associates when he went on his mission of peace to Hastinapore. 'Nay, they on the contrary became so bold as to attempt his arrest in breach of established tradition. In any case after Arjun had known the significance of the four-armed form, no doubt should have remained in his mind as to what his duty was under the circumstances. But what do we actually notice? We find Krishna arguing with Arjun and trying to persuade him to fight in Chapter XVIII, Shs. 58-61. His argument is practically

## Arjun: An Exception

श्रीभगवानुवाच

मया प्रसन्नेन तवाजुने

रूपं परं दर्शितात्मयोगात् ।

तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं

यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥ ४७ ॥

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानै-

र्न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिस्त्यैः ।

एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके

द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥ ४८ ॥

**The Lord said—**

*By Me pleased with thee, O Arjun,*

*This transcendant form has been shown thee*  
*by Yoga power,*

*Resplendant, cosmic, infinite and primal,*

*Not-seen-by-other-than-thyself before\*.*

47

over and he has little to add. We find him actually threatening Arjun with destruction if he did not listen to him. Why this recalcitrant attitude on his part if what is narrated here did actually take place? Why should Krishna be under the necessity of putting a question to Arjun in Shloka 72 of Chapter XVIII and why should Arjun indicate his determination to fight by declaring in Shloka 73 that his delusion was destroyed only after the teaching in Shloka 66 though it is not different from that of Shloka 55 of this chapter.

\*Arjun sees the sages and Siddhas—persons who have attained perfection—praising Krishna and looking at Him (Sh. 21, lines 3, 4, Sh. 22, lines 3, 4). They could only be looking at His Universal form. If that is so, then how can it be said that Arjun was the first to see this form? If in fact he did not actually see the Siddhas looking at Krishna, then the vision was just a figment of

*Neither by knowledge of Vedic sacrifice nor  
charity,*

*Nor ritual nor severe austerities,*

*I in this form am liable in this world of men*

*To be seen by any but Thee, O great Kuru*

*hero\*. 48*

the imagination and in this sense it is mere tautology to say that no one had seen this form before, as Krishna in his wisdom may not have thought it proper to use his Yogic power to show this form to anybody before this, though doubt is thrown even on this if the incident of the exhibition of Universal form after his attempted arrest by Duryodhan at Hastinapore mentioned in Adhyaya 131, Shs. 2 to 15, Udyoga Parva, is accepted as true. But the idea sought to be conveyed here is that no one had seen the Universal form of the Supreme before and that Arjun was in fact seeing His Cosmic form. In this view his sight of the Siddhas looking at the Supreme was real. If the Siddhas cannot see the Universal form wherein then lies their perfection? Surely Siddhi must mean realisation of the true nature of the fundamental verities and living in consciousness of the same. If the whole panorama of nature is a play of the Divine to them, then they ever live in consciousness of this Universal form. This is Krishna's own teaching too. It is categorically stated that many men had attained Krishna-state by devotion, knowledge and selfless activity (Chap. IV, Shs. 10, 15). Did not any of these persons contemplate the Creator-form of the Supreme? If not then how could they have acquired God-consciousness? One who rises beyond the play of *Gunas*—a *gunateet*—must ever abide in this consciousness. Then again what is the state of him who attains the mentality of Chapter VI, Shlokas 29 to 31? No one can be called a Yogi according to Krishna if he does not possess a mentality in which consciousness of the Universal form is not a living reality. In a state of contemplation what else is there to see except this play of the Supreme—Creator, Destroyer and Sustainer at the same time.

\*By the kindness of Vyasa, the author of the Gita, Sanjaya too was an eye witness of the Universal form of Krishna. On the eve of the battle, Vyasa, who was a relation of the Pandavas had by

### Old Form Shown

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो

दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम् ।

व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं

तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ॥ ४६ ॥

संजय उवाच

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा

स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।

आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं

भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥ ४७ ॥

*Be not afraid or be bewildered,  
Seeing this terrible form of Mine,  
Fear-free and rejoicing in heart you  
See My old form again.*

49

his spiritual powers bestowed on Sanjaya the capacity of seeing all that was to happen at Kurukshetra, from Hastinapore in order to keep blind Dhritrashtra fully informed. Sanjaya narrated the whole occurrence bit by bit as he observed it. This is evident from Shlokas 9 to 14 and 50 of this chapter. The matter is put beyond all controversy by Shlokas 74 to 77 of Chapter XVIII also, where Sanjaya avers that he feels rejoiced at recollecting the wonderful Universal form, Krishna, showed to Arjun at Kurukshetra. The question however arises about the accuracy of the statement in this Shloka. Taking by itself it does not exclude the possibility of any other great sage conferring this gift on mortal man. But the point is that he who could so bestow the power must possess it himself, which postulates a former exercise of it by himself. Vyas must have seen this form before to be able to confer the power to see it on Sanjaya independently of Krishna. This at once brings us in conflict with the statement in shloka 47 *supra*, that no one had seen this form before.

**Sanjaya said—**

*Saying so to Arjun, Vasudēva  
Showed His old form again  
And consoled the awe-stricken,  
The Mighty Soul becoming gentle in form.* 50

**Arjun Self-possessed Again**

**अर्जुन उवाच**

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन ।  
इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः ॥ ५१ ॥

**Arjun said—**

*Seeing this Thy gentle human form,  
O Janardan,  
Now I am self-possessed and myself again.* 51

**Who Can See This Form**

**श्रीभगवानुवाच**

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्ट्वानसि यन्मम ।  
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाक्षिणः ॥ ५२ ॥  
नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।  
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्ट्वानसि मां यथा ॥ ५३ ॥  
भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।  
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥ ५४ ॥  
मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मदभक्तः संगवर्जितः ।  
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पांडव ॥ ५५ ॥



## Yoga of Devotion

**अर्जुन उवाच**

एवं 'सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।  
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्ताः ॥ १ ॥

**Arjun said—**

*Of the devotees ever abiding in the self  
  worshipping Thee  
And those meditating on the Unmanifest  
Imperishable who know Yoga better?*

The reference here is to the Creator Aspect and the Unmanifest Aspect of the Supreme. In the first He is manifest in all sentient and non-sentient objects of the universe. In the other He is beyond the universe.

The use of the word "thou" identifying Krishna with the Creator aspect is poetical. The reference is clearly to the Universal-form described in Chapter XI, which if contemplated by any devotee would at once envelope the human form of Krishna beyond recognition.

The Supreme is really one in either form. A Yogi approaching from either aspect attains the same Being. The equipment for reaching the Goal is the same.

## The Creator-Aspect

श्रीभगवानुवाच

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।

श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥२॥

The Lord said—

*Their mind fixed in Me, ever self-abiding who  
worship Me  
With perfect faith, they are treated the most  
steadfast.*

2

## The Unmanifest Aspect

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।

सर्वत्रगमर्चित्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥३॥

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्राहं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥४॥

*Who contemplate the Imperishable,  
the Unmanifest, the Indefinable,  
All-pervading, Inconceivable, Unchanging,  
Immutable, Eternal,  
Controlling the "sense-aggregate, towards all  
one outlook,  
Acting for the welfare of all they attain Me  
too.*



**Creator aspect****Unmanifest aspect**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Their mind fixed in Me.</li> <li>2. Ever "Yukt" (self-abiding).</li> <li>3. Worshipping with perfect faith.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who contemplate the Unmanifest.</li> <li>2. Controlling the sense-aggregate.</li> <li>3. Acting for the welfare of all.</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

Yukt is defined in Chapter VI, Shs. 8 and 18. It is another name for control of the sense-aggregate, as senses are controlled to draw the mind away from sense-objects and fix it in the self within. When this is achieved it gives rise to the state of even outlook towards all beings as the self in his state of purity apart from the body which he regards as his chariot separate from himself realises his sameness with other selves. All are eddies in the ocean of manifested phenomena, dwelling within physical bodies as ordained by the Supreme.

Worshipping the Manifest with perfect faith can only mean worshipping Him as operating His myriad forms, for He is not one form but an aggregate of forms. How can man worship the myriad forms except by service? This is just what he who contemplates the Unmanifest does, he acts for the welfare of all. So the equipment in both cases is the same and devotion to either aspect leads to the Goal.

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।

अव्यक्ता हि , गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्विरवाप्यते ॥ ५ ॥

*Harder their task, whose mind is gone on the  
Unmanifest,  
The Unmanifest Goal is hard to realise  
by dwellers in a body. 5*

For a self who lives in a body and cannot easily conceive himself without one, it is easier to contemplate the Supreme functioning within the myriad forms on the analogy of his own self. Though he cannot contemplate himself existing without a body he can yet contemplate the resident self as apart from it. A man on account of loss of legs may be absolutely helpless without a carriage but he for that reason never treats himself as the carriage. Contemplating the Unmanifest would be like contemplating our Immutable self as he is without the body, a state which we never experience in actual life. The difficulty is augmented still further when we have to conceive the Unmanifest beyond His manifest forms. Contemplation in the Universal form is easier as it gives a sure base to the mind. It can think of diverse objects being operated by a mysterious Power. While in the Unmanifest form the mind has to rest in blank.

### Supreme Advice

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।  
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥६॥  
तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।  
ममामि न चिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥७॥

*Whoso dedicating all actions to Me devoted  
 to Me,  
 Meditating on Me with unswerving Yoga  
 worship, 6  
 I their Saviour from the ocean of the mortal  
 world  
 Become ere long, O Parth, their mind in Me  
 fixed. 7*

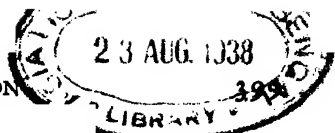
If the Supreme is contemplated functioning within the universe (macrocosm) with absolute devotion like ourselves functioning within the body (microcosm) and all our actions are performed without desire for fruit as our individual offering in sacrifice divine and the mind finally withdrawn from attachment to sense-objects dwells solely in Him then we can be liberated from the bondage of death. Death is an incident of the body-form which is assumed to enjoy the fruit of actions. But when there are no actions for the self's sake, the necessity of assuming a body-form ceases.

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धि निवेशय ।

निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥८॥

*Root thy mind in Me turn thy reason on to Me,  
 Thou shalt then dwell in Me, this thou doubt  
 not. 8*

Withdraw your mind and reason from the domination of the world of sense and put them under the sway of the Creator. It would result in His everlasting companionship, there would be nothing left to break it—sense world the other rival having been finally jilted. There should be total surrender of the self to



the Supreme. As regards his body the devotee should be as described in Chapter III, Sh. 17: "For one rejoicing in the self, full to satiety in the self, content in the self, nought is binding to do." But this assumes a sub-conscious purified of all self-regarding impressions which may not be the case, so Krishna places before him several

### Alternatives

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।

अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनंजय ॥६॥

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥१०॥

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥११॥

*If thou cannot rest thy mind in Me with  
firmness,  
Then by the Yoga of practice thou strive  
after Me. 9*

*If ill-fitted for practice then perform actions  
for Me,  
By performing actions for My sake thou shalt  
gain perfection. 10*

*If incapable even of this then refuting in  
My Yoga  
And self-controlled give up fruit of actions. 11*

If thy sub-conscious still contains impressions which when aroused distract attention, then by constant appli-

Theoretical knowledge of Truth is better than restraining the sub-conscious from taking various forms (*chitta vritti nirodha*). Restraint without knowledge of Truth is a task of supreme difficulty. Meditation (abiding in the Supreme) is better than theoretical knowledge, as it is theory realised in practice. Non-fruit-regarding mentality is more advantageous than self-union mentality as it quickly leads to peace. Hav-

ing regard to man's state of mind and tendencies various alternatives have been suggested to select from according to the bent of his nature. Anyone may appear more suited and likely to lead to quicker result according to one's mental and moral make up. But any method once chosen may arouse the same unswerving devotion to the Supreme. The strength and intensity of devotion is not governed by the particular path chosen. It depends upon the completeness of the surrender and sacrifice. The path is simply a means to concretise the feeling there is within for union with the Supreme. There is in fact no gradation in the courses of action indicated. Anyone that suits a particular temperament is the best. But looking to the general tendency of human nature and the tremendous hold the sense-world has upon man giving him a consciousness of separate existence as an individual entity and egoistic mentality in all his activity, renunciation of fruit of action harmonises better with his nature, as it gives mental peace by stopping the play of desire the single source of all human worry and anxiety. With such an attitude of unconcern in fruit of actions he cannot lose his balance whether his action causes harmony or temporary disharmony.

### Attributes of a Devotee

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः कर्तुः एव च ।

निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ १३ ॥

संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मे भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १४ ॥

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।  
 हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥ १५ ॥  
 अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दत्त उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।  
 सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मदभक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १६ ॥  
 यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।  
 शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥  
 समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।  
 शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः संगविवर्जितः ॥ १८ ॥  
 तुल्यनिंदास्तुतिर्मैत्री संतुष्टो येन केनचित् ।  
 अनेकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मेप्रियो नरः ॥ १९ ॥

*Without ill-will towards beings, friendly and  
 kindly,  
 Without I or mine feeling, in pleasure pain  
 poised and forbearing 13*  
*Content, ever self-subdued, Yogi of firm  
 convictions,  
 Mind and reason to Me dedicated,  
 such a one is dear to Me. 14*  
*With whom the world is at ease and who is at  
 ease with the world,  
 Quit of joy, jealousy, fear and worry,  
 such a one is dear to Me. 15*  
*Independent, pure, clever, 'unconcerned and  
 unworried,  
 Not self-motived in commencing actions,  
 such a devotee is dear to Me. 16*

*Who neither rejoices nor is jealous nor worries*  
*nor craves,*  
*Who has given up good and evil and is*  
*devotion-filled, he is dear to Me. 17*  
*To friend and opponent same also in honour*  
*and dishonour,*  
*In heat, cold, pleasure and pain poised, without*  
*attachment whatever, 18*  
*Unaffected by praise or blame, reticent,*  
*content with anything,*  
*Unattached to homestead, of settled*  
*convictions full of devotion such a man is*  
*dear to Me. 19*

Man=Cognition+Feeling+Will

Knowledge	Devotion	Action
(Gyán)	(Upásná)	(Karma)

Man is a composite of these three fundamental factors. Unswerving devotion is possible if the other two companions are harmonised, else not. Either or both if involved in the net-work of desire would distract the mind and lead to inconsistent conduct in normal life. Of what avail is devotion if the only knowledge which the devotee possesses is, that the myriad sense-objects are a source of true joy and the Supreme should be approached with a view to put him in possession thereof in abundant measure? Of what avail is devotion if though possessing 'theoretical learning of the beauty of non-fruit-regarding activity the devotee on account of previous habits or want of sense-control engages in activity which at once sets up the sense-world



as a rival object of devotion? *Pari passu*, of what avail is knowledge and Karma if there is no intense feeling for union with the Supreme to provide the necessary energy and momentum to her companions?

Qualities affecting all the three are mentioned as the attributes of a true devotee in the above shlokas. Harmonious development of all into God-consciousness and total surrender of the limited personality to the Supreme makes a man a true devotee. He remains and moves in the world as before, but in a changed attitude. He is always a Yogi (Sh. 14) and a Gyáni, because without a knowledge of the self, the universe set to a plan by a beneficent Providence and the Supreme beyond both, he cannot act without attachment, and with an even outlook towards all, lift his consciousness beyond the qualities of Nature (*gunateet*).

ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपास्ते ।

श्रद्धधाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥२०॥

*Who this immortal doctrine as taught do  
follow  
With faith, full of Me as the Supreme Goal  
such devotees are dearest to Me. 20*

**Dharma**—Doctrine as taught in the Gita—total self-surrender to God and non-fruit-regarding activity for world-harmony.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु ० भक्तियोगो नाम द्वादशोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter XII . . . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*  
**YOGA OF DEVOTION**

## CHAPTER XIII

### The Field and Knower of the Field

In the last chapter the way of attaining the Supreme by contemplating the Manifest form was described. In this Chapter Krishna points out the way to contemplate the Unmanifest Eternal\* and so doing reach the same Goal.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

इदं शरीरं कौंतेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।  
एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥ १ ॥

The Lord said—

*This body, O Kunti-born, is called Kshetra,  
The one within who knows it is called  
Kshetrayajna. 1*

**Kshetra**—Field (body).

**Kshetrayajna**—Knower of the field (God).

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।  
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥ २ ॥  
तत्क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक् च यद्विकारि यतश्च यत् ।  
स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु ॥ ३ ॥  
ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छंदोभिर्विविधैः पृथक् ।  
ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः ॥ ४ ॥

*Me ye know to be the field-Knower of all  
fields, O Bharat,  
Knowledge of field-knower and the field is  
true knowledge, is My view.* 2

*What that field is, what its nature and  
changing-forms and what its origin,  
What the field-knower is and what his powers  
that thou listest in brief from Me,* 3

*Sung by the sages in ways manifold and in  
various distinctive Vedic hymns,  
In passages of Brahma Sutra reasoned and of  
certain meaning.* 4

**Brahma Sutra**—Called also Vedanta Shastra, another work of the author of the Gita.

### The Field

महामूतान्यहंकारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।

इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चैन्द्रियगोचराः ॥ ५ ॥

*The great elements, reason, egoism, and the  
unmanifest,  
Senses ten and one and five pastures of the  
senses.* 5

**Great Elements**—Earth, water, fire, air, and ether (*akāśh*).

**Unmanifest**—Undifferentiated Nature (*Mulprakriti*).

**Senses of knowledge**—Eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin.

**Organs of action**—Hands, feet, mouth, anus, generative-organ.

**Co-ordinator of the above ten**—Mind.

**Five pastures of the senses**—Colour, sound, smell, taste, touch. Through these man comes in contact with the entire manifested phenomena of the universe.

These together make up the twenty-four constituents of the body (field) in the inactive state.

### Its Modifications

इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं संघातश्चेतना धृतिः ।

एतत्त्रेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥६॥

*Affection, aversion, joy and sorrow, awareness,  
and fortitude, this aggregate  
Has been briefly described as the field in its  
modifications.* 6

All these are mental states and are treated as properties of the body by the *Sankhyas*. According to the *Vaisheshikas* they are properties inherent in the self. According to the *Buddhists* the whole man is an aggregate of the above constituents. They do not recognise the existence of a soul as a separate entity in whose presence alone this aggregate operates.

Man always adopts a certain attitude towards outside objects. They are either desirable or undesirable. If the first there is joy on acquisition and sorrow on failure. If the second there is joy in escape therefrom and sorrow in forced possession. His attitude towards his body state is also the same, pleasurable feeling and joyous mood give rise to affection, and unpleasant feel-

ing and sombre mood cause aversion. There is also consciousness of separate existence from all other objects and beings in a body having volume and mass. There is fortitude amidst the changing phenomena of nature, that he has an existence which is enduring. There is also firmness of action for contemplated ends inspite of resistance and opposition. All possible modifications of the body while it is tenanted by the self of man fall into one or other of the aforesaid main heads.

### Knowledge

अमानित्वमदंभित्वमहिंसा क्षांतिरार्जवम् ।

आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥७॥

*Humility, simplicity, non-violence,  
forbearance, uprightness,  
Devotion to teacher, purity, stability  
and self-control. 7*

**Humility**—It is the negation of vanity. The basis of pride is consciousness of possessing something in a larger measure than others. But this something is in the body only, which is my temporary tenement. I am not the originator of either the agency (*Kartritva*) or the activity (*Karma*) or the fruit which activity produces. These alone cause the difference. (Ch. V, Sh. 14). Recognition of this fact is to know reality.

— **Simplicity**—Hypocrisy is desire to appear what one is not, it relates to the state and appearance of the body. Recognition of this, showing unconcern for what after all is a temporary possession is *Gyán*.

**Non-violence**—All violence is because of attachment to the body and its needs. It indicates want of faith in the Supreme and ignorance of the beneficent nature of the Universe-Cycle which is moving in the interest of all, leaving us to perform our assigned duties. Cognition of this leads to non-violence.

**Forbearance**—Retaliation to the harmful activity of another is ignorance, for it shows attachment to the body, and non-recognition of the fact that his harmful attitude is itself due to ignorance of his true nature. It indicates that both are blind. So forbearance which means recognition of this position connotes knowledge.

**Uprightness**—Crookedness indicates self-blindness, seeking a temporary advantage for the body, instead of showing unconcern for sense-contacts and bearing them patiently. (Chap. II, Sh. 14).

**Worship of Guru**—Shows keenness to gain knowledge and feeling of gratitude.

**Purity**—Impurity hinders growth and recognition of this is knowledge.

**Firmness and Self-control**—No reflection on the nature of Truth is possible with a fickle-mind and in a body wherein the senses are out of control and distract attention.

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहंकार एव च ।

जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥८॥

*Indifference to objects of senses, and absence  
of egoism,  
Keeping before the mind, the demerits of birth,  
death, decay, sickness and sorrow. 8*

These indicate non-attachment to the body and knowledge of the self as an entity separate therefrom.

असक्तिरनभिष्वंगः पुत्रद्वारगृहादिषु ।

नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥ ६ ॥

*Non-attachment and absence of  
(blind) affection for son, wife and home,  
Constant even-mindedness in occurrence of the  
desired or the undesired. 9*

These indicate knowledge of the transitory nature of worldly relations terminating with the body and of the sense world as a ministrant of body wants.

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।

विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥ १० ॥

*Unerring devotion to Me by unswerving  
Yoga,  
Living in a quiet quarter, and distaste in  
mixing with people. 10*

The emphasis is on the value of reticence and quiet. These indicate knowledge of the true mission of man's sojourn here, which is realisation of union with the Supreme and not whiling away time in the company of unenlightened men.

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।

एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥ ११ ॥

*Constancy in knowledge of the self and  
reflection on the end of knowledge of Truth,  
This is called knowledge, what is opposed to  
it is ignorance. P1*

These indicate the essential things worth knowing—the self, the underlying basis of the changing phenomena of the Universe, and the Supreme. All else is ignorance, as it is some form of entanglement of the self in the phenomena of the sense-world.

### Knower of the Field

ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वाऽमृतमश्नुते ।

अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते ॥ १२ ॥

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।

सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥ १३ ॥

सर्वैन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वैन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।

असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च ॥ १४ ॥

*What is the knowable that I shall relate  
knowing which you'll enjoy immortality,  
The Beginningless is the Supreme Brahman, He  
is said to be neither being nor 'not-being. 12  
He has hands and feet everywhere, eyes, heads  
and mouths everywhere,  
Ears everywhere, enveloping everything He  
abides in the Universe, 13*



*Shining with the qualities of the senses, but  
without the senses,  
Unrelated yet sustaining all, without qualities,  
but enjoying the qualities. 14*

Senses are given us to know the world without us, because it extends apart from us. But He who is everywhere and in everything knows about everything, so without possessing the senses He knows all that is worth knowing through them.

He is unattached, because He is without wants, He is perfect. He sustains all, because sustenance comes from the universe which is His creation. He is beyond the qualities, as qualities inhere in Nature and He is beyond it. Why, it is He who disturbing the equilibrium of nature, starts the play of qualities which results in the manifestation of this universe. And yet on the analogy of our own self, He may be said to be the enjoyer of the qualities as He abides in all manifested objects as director of their activity.

बहिरंतश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।

सूक्ष्मत्वात्तद्विज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चांतिके च तत् ॥ १५ ॥

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।

भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥ १६ ॥

*Within and without all beings, moving and  
also unmoving,*

*Incomprehensible because of subtlety,  
both far and near is He. 15*

*Undivided He abides divided in all beings,  
Sustainer of beings is that Knowable, also their  
Destroyer and Creator. 16*

Extension is a quality of nature only. He is beyond nature and is therefore without extension. Without extension there can be no division into parts. Yet He though indivisible, abides in all beings which have a separate existence with respect to each other. So He a Unity abides in objects which appear to have a separate existence. He sustains the cycle during the period of its duration and then at the end, manifested objects disappear into the unmanifest and are recreated at the proper time. This process goes on on a minor scale every moment in the smaller cycles within the main cycle under laws of His creation.

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य धिष्ठितम् ॥ १७ ॥

*He is the light of all lights, He is said to be  
beyond darkness,  
Knowledge, Knowable and the Goal of  
knowledge, He abides in the hearts of all. 17*

इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं चोक्तं समासतः ।

मद्भक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भावायोपपद्यते ॥ १८ ॥

*Thus, the field, knowledge and the Knowable  
have been briefly described,  
Realising this My devotee becomes fitted for  
My state. 18*

A devotee who contemplates the Unmanifest Eternal unlike the other who contemplates the Manifest form, when he is illumined by the knowledge of the field, the field-knower and the nature of true know-

ledge and this knowledge becomes the ruling principle of his life, attains the Supreme.

NOTE.—Devotion is necessary for a *Gyani*, and looking to the elements of *Gyan* described in Shs. 7 to 11 it is obvious that Karma Yoga too is essential. Homogeneous development of the entire personality made up of the three factors—cognition, feeling and will—leads to the Goal and not development of anyone to the neglect of the others. In fact perfect development of one is impossible if the others are neglected, and the result is always unsatisfactory. It results in a life of hypocrisy.

### Self and Nature

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्वचनादी उभावपि ।

विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसंभवान् ॥१६॥

*Nature and self both, ye know to be without  
origin,*

*And the qualities and modifications ye know  
born of nature. 19*

Nature and self are both unborn, without a beginning. The self within is changeless, all changes take place in nature. *Mulaprakriti* (unmanifest nature) becomes modified into the great elements, understanding and egoism and their smaller manifestations. It is however never non-existent. It exists either as some manifest modification, or as unmanifest nature\*.

\*This is a doctrine of fundamental importance for examination of the theories of Dualism (*Dwaitism*) and Monism (*Adwaitism*).

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे, हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।

पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥२०॥

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान् ।

कारणं गुणसंगोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥२१॥

*For the agency of cause and effect, nature is  
responsible,*

*For the enjoyment of pleasure and pain, the  
self is responsible. 20*

*Self in nature seated enjoys the qualities born  
of nature,*

*Attachment to these becomes the cause of  
birth in good and evil wombs. 21*

Cause and effect both imply the idea of change, which is a characteristic of nature. So they both inhere in it. Agency also connotes activity in a body-form, hence this too is a quality of nature. The self seated in the body gets mixed up with body-affections and as body by its constitution requires only some objects out of the many, he has to select. This necessity of selection becomes the cause of pleasure and pain. So the self is the author of the meaning he puts on how outside objects affect the body in the form of pleasure and pain.

Not enjoyment, but attachment thereto is the cause of rebirth; assumption of body forms takes place to concretise the attachment which lingers on until destroyed.

Thus the self always regards himself to be the enjoyer of sense-objects, and also master of his senses

inasmuch as it is he who uses them, but there is also the following point to be carefully noted:—

उपद्रष्टानुमंता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥२२॥

“ *Spectator, Permitter, Supporter, Enjoyer,*  
*and Lord,*  
*Is called the Highest Self, the Spirit Supreme*  
*in the body. 22*

There is a Supreme Spirit in this very body who is called *Parmatma* (the Highest Self) who is its Supreme Lord, supports it by His infinite power and watches its working. It is He with whose permission the senses function and who is the real enjoyer of all body-action.

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥२३॥

*Who knows the self and nature along with its*  
*qualities,*  
*Moving in all possible ways, he is not born*  
*again. 23*

One who understands the self and nature with its qualities knows that he is eternal and changeless, that all change is due to the modifications of nature on account of its qualities. The body within in which he is encased as part of nature is ever active like its parent and in perpetual contact with it ever assimilating and dissimilating matter and energy therefrom for its preservation. The self through ignorance identifies himself with body-affectiōns and suffers re-birth. Attach-

ment and aversion to objects he comes to regard as his own property and therefore he voluntarily throws himself into this whorl of nature. Equally voluntarily and with equal freedom can he hold aloof therefrom and escape. Only it requires effort because he has been moving in ignorance for long which has made the chain of attachment strong. To affect a breach won't be easy. He who understands this as an unalterable fact and acts accordingly escapes from the bondage of nature. However he may move in the world of sense, he knows the body moving and being affected and not he. He treats the body as moving under the direction of the Supreme and himself gives up all idea of agency in action.

### Modes of Attainment

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।

अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥२४॥

अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वान्येभ्य उपासते ।

तेऽपि चात्तिरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः ॥२५॥

*Some see the self by the self in the self by  
meditation,*

*Some by knowledge and others by non-fruit-  
regarding actions. 24*

*Others not knowing the above hearing from  
others worship,*

*They also cross over death, firmly believing  
what they have heard. 25*

1. Yoga of Meditation.

3. Yoga of Action.

2. Yoga of Knowledge.

4. Yoga of Worship.

### True Insight

याक्त्संजायते किञ्चित्सत्त्वं स्यात्वरजंगमम् ।

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥२६॥

*Whatever object animate or inanimate comes  
into existence,  
Know that as the product of the union of the  
"field" and "Knower of the field", O bull of  
Bharats. 26*

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।

विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥२७॥

समं पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम् ।

न हिनस्त्यात्मनाऽऽत्मानं ततो याति पराङ्गतिम् ॥२८॥

*In all beings abiding the Supreme Lord,  
The Unperishing amidst the perishing who sees  
verily seeth. 27*

*Because seeing the Supreme abiding equally  
everywhere of one outlook towards all,  
He does not destroy the self by the self and  
reaches the Supreme Goal. 28*

All manifested objects in nature are a composite of nature and the Supreme. He abides in them all. There is nothing apart from Him. He who sees Him abiding so knows the true function of sight and understands both. Such a one does not allow his body to dominate his self, but conquers it and so conquering becomes wholly unconcerned, entrusting it to its true Master—the Supreme abiding within who knows its function.

He also treats the body-forms of others on the same footing. He treats their activity as God's like his own. And as all move guided by one Power, he gives up all ill-will towards others and concerns himself with his Goal and attains It by exclusive devotion to Him.

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।

यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥२६॥

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्यमनुपश्यति ।

तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ॥३०॥

*All actions are really being performed by  
Nature.*

*Who sees and the self as non-actor, he seeth. 29*

*When he sees diversity of beings rooted in  
Unity*

*And its evolution from the same then he  
becomes Brahman-like. 30*

When a man regards the entire universe as evolved from one source and also existing in the same, he ceases to differentiate between individual products. He treats each as His manifestation carefully looked after by Him. He looks upon himself as His manifestation also watched and looked after like the rest. So he adopts an even outlook towards all. Such a man's attitude is so described in Chapter V, Sh. 18: "An humble learned Brahmin, a cow or an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater sages view alike with the same eye."

अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्माऽयमव्ययः ।

शरीरस्योऽपि कौंतेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥३१॥



*Being without origin and without qualities the  
Imperishable Supreme Self,  
Abiding in the body, O Kunti-born, neither  
acts nor is affected.* 31

The Supreme Unmanifest is beyond nature, So He is without qualities. He is *nirguna*. It is only when He is manifested in nature that we attribute qualities to Him. But the activity in nature is really due to its own qualities which inhere in it. Similarly a body with size and form as all natural objects are affects only one like itself. It cannot affect anything which has neither size nor form. The Supreme who is beyond nature—the mother of all particular objects—is not affected by it. On contemplation we find that our self is apart from the body and body-affections remain confined to the body alone. It is only due to ignorance that the self identifies with them. But by knowledge and reflection man can destroy this false notion of identity. The Supreme who is perfect and all knowledge, cannot fall into this delusion and ever remains unaffected.

### The Self is Stainless

यथा सर्वगतं सौदम्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।  
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥३२॥

*Like unto the all-pervading Akásh being subtle  
remaining unaffected,  
The self pervading this body remains  
unaffected.* 32

Ether pervades everything. All is immersed in it and yet being the subtlest of all while it affects every-

thing nothing affects it in return. Similarly the self within pervades the whole body, not a particle is free from his influence. Being subtler than the body the self is never affected by it.

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।

क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥३३॥

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमंतरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।

भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षं च ये विदुर्यीति ते परम् ॥३४॥

*Just as one sun illumines this whole world  
So the field-dweller illumines the whole field,*

*O Bharat. 33*

*The distinction of the field and the Knower of  
the field by the eyes of wisdom,  
And liberation from manifested nature who  
know, they attain the Supreme. 34*

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु० क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगो नाम त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter XIII. . . Sung by the Lord Designated*

**YOGA OF DISTINCTION OF THE FIELD AND KNOWER**

**OF THE FIELD**

## CHAPTER XIV. The Three Qualities

श्रीभगवानुवाच

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।  
यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः ॥ १ ॥  
इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः ।  
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥ २ ॥

The Lord said—

*I again instruct thee in the highest of all  
knowledge,  
Knowing it, all silent sages attained high  
perfection from here.  
Rooted in this knowledge, and having attained  
My nature,  
They are unborn at Creation and untormented  
at Dissolution.*

### Highest knowledge

मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भं दधाम्यहम् ।  
संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥ ३ ॥

*Mahat-brahman is my womb, therein I place  
the germ,  
Therefrom is the birth of all the Manifest,  
O Bharat.*

**Mahat-brahman:** Nature (*Prakriti*).

सर्वयोनिषु कौंतेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः ।

तासां ब्रह्ममहद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥ ४ ॥

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः ।

• निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥ ५ ॥

*In all wombs, O Kuntiborn, whatever forms  
come into being,*

*Their ultimate womb is Nature and I the  
germ-placing Father. 4*

*Satva, Raj, Tam, these qualities born of*

*Nature  
Chain, O mighty-armed, the changeless dweller  
in this body. 5*

The three qualities of nature by producing a feeling of attachment delude the dwelling self and chain him down to the universe-cycle.

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।

सुखसंगेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसंगेन चानघ ॥ ६ ॥

*Of these Satva, because of its purity is  
illuminating and painless,*

*It binds by union to joy and knowledge,  
O Sinless. 6*

The quality *Satva* is the best. It gives rise to a state of being in man, in which he reacts to external impressions not in blind obedience to sense, but as one who knows that sense-enjoyment is not all, that its joy is temporary and fleeting and often leads to wrong action.

Therefore he controls his sense-aggregate and establishes harmony between himself and the world without by adopting an attitude towards other beings in which due attention is paid to their feelings and interests. The body connection is realised to be temporary, but within this limit there is a desire for wholesome enjoyment, always minding other peoples' freedom to do the same and assisting them in their proper pursuits.

Sense-control and mind-control is there but the activity is not without desire for fruit. Fruit is desired but not to the prejudice or detriment of others. Because of the absence of a desire to injure, the inside is illumined with knowledge and there is joy. But he moves within nature and willingly opens himself to its influence involving himself in rebirth.

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासंगस्सुदुर्भवम् ।  
तन्निबध्नाति कौंतेय कर्मसंगेन देहिनम् ॥ ७ ॥

*Raj know ye tempter and generator of  
desire-union,  
It binds the dweller, O Kuntiborn, by  
attachment to action. 7*

The quality *Raj* denotes activity and ambition. The personality becomes the field of ardent desires which take hold of man compelling him to act for their fulfilment. In so acting, their intensity leads to opposition to those who stand in the way and attachment to those who help. They throw him headlong into the vortex of this revolving wheel of nature, with all its loves, hates, likes and dislikes. This quality binds the

self by creating in him attachment to action, as through that alone can ambition be fulfilled.

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।

प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥८॥

*Tam born of ignorance ye know and fascinator  
of body-dwellers,  
By listlessness, indolence and sleep it binds,  
O Bharat. 8*

The quality *Tam* denotes self-blindness, darkness and inertia. The man ignorant of himself, without inclination or breadth of view to understand the universe, simply lives in his own surroundings treating them as his whole world. Tormented by body-wants he acts under pressure to keep himself alive. His ideas on everything concerning himself and dependants are made up for him by his environment. Without judgment, he accepts on trust the opinions of others. His is the true herd instinct. Devoid of knowledge, his cravings hold full sway over his being. Under their influence he engages in activity heedless of future consequences. His actions are on the plane of instinct and feeling and not guided by well-informed reason. He can only act under the impulsion of animal wants. He is devoid of ambition and has no ideal. Therefore such a one remains chained to nature through blindness and sloth. He is just a stage higher than lifeless matter, inasmuch as he is live matter, but his activities are not very different from it except in those compellingly essential particulars which if ignored threaten body dissolution.

These three qualities govern man's life on this plane

and hereafter. Their action determines his moods of joy and sorrow.

सत्त्वं सुखे संजयति रजः कर्मणि भारत ।

ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे संजयत्युत ॥६॥

*Satva unites to joy and Raj to action, O Bharat,  
Tam first enveloping knowledge to listlessness  
unites. 9*

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।

रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तया ॥१०॥

*By mastering Raj and Tam comes into being  
Satva, O Bharat,  
By checking Satva and Tam, Raj and by  
covering Satva and Raj, Tam. 10*

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रकाश उपजायते ।

ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥११॥

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारंभः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा ।

रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥१२॥

*In all the gates of this body light shines.  
Of knowledge when, then know Satva to be  
predominant. 11*

*Greed, activity, initiation of action, anxiety,  
and craving  
Appear when Raj is predominant, O Bull of  
Bharats. 12*

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।

तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥१३॥

*Darkness, inactivity, heedlessness and delusion  
Arise when Tam predominates, O son of Kuru.* 13

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।  
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान्प्रतिपद्यते ॥ १४ ॥

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसंगिषु जायते ।  
तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥ १५ ॥

*When the dweller leaves the body with Satva  
predominating,  
He attains the stainless regions of the knowers  
of the Highest.* 14

*Meeting death in Raj he is born among the  
actionists,  
If he leaves in Tam then in deluded wombs  
is he born.* 15

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् ।

रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम् ॥ १६ ॥

*Good works, they say, have satvic and pure  
fruit,  
Of Raj the fruit is sorrow, of Tam ignorance.* 16

The fruit of good works is pure, because they do not create disharmony. Conflict with the activity of others causes friction, which diminishes the chance of activity maturing into the contemplated fruit. When care is taken to avoid it by making personal activity harmonious with that of others, the result attained is



pure and does not produce a feeling of sinfulness or guilt within. In *Raj* ambition makes one blind to the interests and feelings of others. The others are simply treated as tools to be utilised for advancement of the cause in hand. This brings him in conflict with them and the result is disappointment in achievement or production of a feeling of hate.

In *Tam* there is forced activity impelled by the urge of body needs. There is a dual between the urge to be active and the desire to be inactive. Activity itself is treated as painful under these circumstances. Maintenance of body itself becomes a burden. All opportunities of riddance from it even at the cost of honour or self-respect are welcomed with pleasure. If provided, there is inactivity even when activity is necessary and desirable in the permanent interests of the self or society. If unprovided, there is activity, even though it be along lines which are certain sources of future trouble to self or society. There is no knowledge within and no foresight. All activity is heedless. The fruit thereof is necessarily sorrow-giving and one keeping the person involved in self-blindness.

सत्वात्संजायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च ।

प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥ १७ ॥

*From Satva arises knowledge, and from Raj  
arises greed,  
Heedlessness, delusion and ignorance in Tam  
have their being. 17*

**Satvic activity**, regard as it does others interests, mindful as it is of others feelings, proceed as it does from

a body under the control and guidance of a properly instructed self, leads to increase of knowledge. The man learns by experience and in the light of his experience makes suitable modifications in his activity.

Rajasic activity leads to greed, because it is directed to satisfaction of desire. Desire satisfaction is for the body vehicle which is always changing. If body feeling is to remain one of perfect satisfaction every change will have to be adjusted, which having regard to its many needs is a task of supreme difficulty. Again the world without is ever changing and unless there be concord between the body and the universe, satisfaction of desire can never be complete, as the desired result would seldom be attained at all, or if at all not in due time. So both these changing factors lead to the growth of supplementary desires, during the process of acting for satisfaction of the original, which opens the door to greed. Indeed the nature of desire is such that it can never be satiated, it increases the more it is fed.

Tam, because of the conflict of the urge to activity and the inclination to sloth, produces short-sightedness, disregard of future consequences and total identification of the self with the body as if the body were all. Therefore there is likelihood of being on the war-path against anybody who might be regarded as likely to injure it and readiness to engage in harmful or sinful activity for its sake.

ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्या मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।

जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥ १८॥

*The Satvic travel up and the Rajasic the  
middle,  
Abiding in low qualities, the Tamasic travel  
beneath. 18*

Men of knowledge and good deeds are born in noble wombs, in the house of good and prosperous people. Those who are fired with ambition and are blinded by greed are born in ordinary middling wombs with a preponderance of pain and sorrow. Those who are ruled by passion and appetite and act heedlessly are born in evil wombs. Their existence is a source of misery to themselves and the rest of mankind.

नान्यं गुणोभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टाऽनुपश्यति ।

गुणोभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥ १६ ॥

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्देही देहसमुद्भवान् ।

जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ २० ॥

*None else actor but qualities when the seer  
seeth,*

*And knoweth the One beyond the qualities,  
to My state attaineth. 19*

*These three qualities the cause of this body,  
the dweller having jumped over,*

*Freed of birth, death, decay, and sorrow attains  
the Immortal. 20*

**Gunateet**

अर्जुन उवाच

कैर्लिङ्गैस्त्रीन्गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो ।

किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन्गुणानतिवर्तते ॥ २१ ॥

**Arjun said—**

*What his marks who has crossed beyond the  
three qualities, O Lord?*

*What his conduct? How does he cross these  
three? 21.*

### Marks

श्रीभगवानुवाच

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च फण्डव ।

न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥२२॥

**The Lord said—**

*From illumination, activity, and delusion,  
O Pandava,  
He does not turn away when present nor craves  
when absent. 22*

### Conduct

उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।

गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नैंगते ॥२३॥

समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टारमकाञ्चनः ।

तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिदात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥२४॥

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।

सर्वारंभपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥२५॥

*Seated like a neutral who is not affected by the  
qualities,*

*Knowing 'only qualities revolve' he remains  
self-centred and unmoved. 23*

*Poised in joy and sorrow, in self-abiding  
 lump of clay, stone and gold same,  
 Pleasant and unpleasant same, balanced in  
 praise and blame, firm 24*  
*In honour and dishonour and in cause of  
 friend or foe same,  
 Actor-sense in action renounced, he is called  
 a Gunateet. 25*

The three qualities are responsible for the manifested phenomena we see in nature. Activity of qualities means change. Even though the change be from darkness to goodness or greedy activity to benevolence and goodness, it is still change and man so long as he mixes up with it is subject to the influence of the qualities. To lift one self above the play of qualities would be to be insusceptible to change and to keep a balanced attitude in its midst whatever its nature. So a *Gunateet* is one who is unaffected by the play of qualities and keeps an even outlook amidst change.

Whether his being is in a mood of *Satva*, i.e., self-possessed and properly instructed in doctrine and morals, full of good will towards all, *or*, is in a mood of activity (*Raj*) for fulfilment of some desire and wants to engage in action, *or*, is inclined to be lazy (*Tam*) at an inopportune moment, he is not disturbed but maintains a calm equilibrium. There is no surge in him to drive away the unpleasant or preserve the pleasant.

He occupies the body as a neutral, treats its activity as the play of the qualities and remains utterly unperturbed. Joy and sorrow do not disturb his balanced calm for he is always abiding in his self. He is ever conscious of the owner-chariot relation. All objects of

nature whatever their differential value in the eye of the others are equally useful and important in his eyes for he knows that everything in nature has its use and it would be the poorer without it, that it fulfills its purpose as well as its companion which is treated as valuable. He is independent of what the world thinks of him, as it judges his action in the light of its own needs which may not be legitimate and proper. Similarly whether it is the matter of a friend or foe, he comes to an impartial decision on the merits and is not swayed by sentiment one way or the other.

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।

स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥२६॥

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिज्ञाऽहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥२७॥

*Who serves Me with unswerving Yoga of  
devotion,  
He crossing over the qualities is fitted to attain  
Brahma-attributes. 26*

*Because, of the Brahman, the Deathless, and  
the Infinite I am the Abode  
Of the Eternal Dharma, and of Absolute Bliss. 27*

The mind of him who devotes himself solely to the Supreme and serves Him exclusively, is withdrawn from the tangle of qualities. He ultimately attains the Brahman-state of equilibrium amidst perpetual change.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु० मुंणत्रयविभागयोगो नाम चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter XIV . . . Sung by the Lord Designated  
YOGA OF DISTINCTION OF THREE QUALITIES*

## CHAPTER XV

### The Supreme Spirit

#### *The Ashvattha Tree*

श्रीभगवानुवाच

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्रादुर्बोध्यम् ।

द्वंदांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥ १ ॥

**The Lord said—**

*With roots above and branches below is the  
ancient Ashvattha tree called,  
Vedic Mantras are its leaves, who knows this is  
a Veda knower.* 1

The Universe is compared to a tree in order to impress its nature and constitution upon the mind. It has roots above because it is an emanation from the Most High, the Supreme Self. He at the beginning of the cycle evolves it out of *Mulprakriti*. It is ancient because though ever in a state of flux, it is never absent.

The *Mantras* of the *Vedas* are its leaves because they deal with some form or another of this whole manifestation. Their principal subject is consideration of its nature and constitution and the Power which operates it. One who reads the *Mantras* thuswise is truly informed of the subject of the *Vedas*.

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखाः

गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः ।

अधश्च मूलान्यनुसंततानि

कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥ २ ॥

*Below and above are spread its branches,  
Nourished by the qualities; sense-objects are  
its buds,*

*Below are scattered in network the rootlets,  
To action bound in this world.*

2

The earth and the heavenly bodies are its branches spread all around, above and below, ever nourished by the three qualities. They supply the juice which maintains the universe in perpetual youth. The myriad objects large and small which sentient-life needs are all products of the five elements through the activity of the qualities.

Again while the main root is above, the small rootlets are down below, because they keep man tied to earth through attachment and desire for objects of sense. Human activity is on the earth plane and down to it is mortal man tied through attachment and aversion to sense-objects. This attachment and aversion is the network of rootlets which keeps men deluded in nature.

### The Supreme Goal

न रूपमस्येह तयोपलभ्यते

नादौ न चादिर्न च संप्रतिष्ठा ।

अशक्त्यमेनं सुविरुद्धमूल-

मसंगशस्त्रेण द्वेदेन हित्वा ॥ ३ ॥



ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गित्व्यं

यस्मिन्नाता न निवर्तति भूयः ।

तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये

यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥ ४ ॥

*Its afore-mentioned form is invisible, as its  
end, origin, and existence,  
This Ashvattha tree of firm roots by the firm  
weapon of detachment hewn, 3  
That Supreme Goal should be searched, whither  
gone they do not return,  
I seek refuge in the same Primeval Being, out  
of whom this ancient activity streamed forth. 4*

The description of the universe as Ashvattha is only metaphorical. To man is denied the privilege of seeing its origin and end, because as an embodied self he comes into existence later and dissolves earlier than the universe.

This tree which has such firm rootlets in the form of affection and aversion to sense-objects can be cut asunder by renunciation of desire for fruit in action or treating body activity as God's. After cutting this, he should turn his attention within and see the Supreme.

निर्मानमोहा जितसंगदोषा

अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।

द्वंद्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञै-

र्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥ ५ ॥

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः ।

यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥६॥

*Without pride or delusion, victorious over the  
taint of attachment,*

*Self-absorbed, desires caste away,*

*Of pairs like pleasure and pain freed,*

*They go undeluded to that Eternal Goal.*

5

*That the sun illumines not, nor the noon, nor  
fire,*

*Whither gone, they don't return, that is My  
Supreme Abode.*

6

That Supreme Goal is self-illuminated, for He is eternal. He existed before the sun, moon and fire—all differentiated forms of nature (*prakriti*)—came into existence at Creation and He remains even when they disappear into the unmanifest at Dissolution (*Pralaya*).

The Goal is the cause of the luminosity of these, reaching that man returneth not.

### The Self

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।

मनः षष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥७॥

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः ।

गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गंधानिवासायात् ॥८॥

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।

अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ॥९॥

उत्क्रामंतं स्थितं वापि भुंजानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।

विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥ १० ॥

यतंतो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यंत्यात्मन्यवास्थितम् ।

यतंतोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥ ११ ॥

*A ray of Mine in this world of beings becoming  
the eternal soul*

*Attracts including the mind the six senses  
residing in Nature. 7*

*When this lord acquires a body or leaves it,  
He takes these away and goes like wind taking  
away scents from their seats. 8*

*In ears, eyes, skin, tongue, nose  
And the mind sitting, he enjoys the objects. 9*

*Migrating, residing, even enjoying or getting  
mixed up with qualities  
The deluded see him not, the wisdom-eyed see. 10*

*Also the striving Yogis, see him established in  
himself,*

*Those of undisciplined Ego and confounded  
mind even striving do not see. 11*

A ray of the Supreme becoming the eternal soul enters nature and focussing round himself the five senses and the mind, becomes an embodied self by assuming a body form. These are his possessions which he brings on entering a physical body and takes away when leaving it. He abiding in the senses and the mind enjoys the objects of sense. In all activities of the body those imbued with, the eyes of wisdom see that this self is

associating with all these activities, that the activities are there because of his presence and would cease on his departure from the body. But those who are deluded identify the self with the body. The Yogis also who are ever trying to control sense-action and mind-activity realise the self's separate existence from the body and know that it is active because of his presence therein. They know that the body obeys his direction, that its activity is always in response to his orders. But those who are devoid of sense-control, are not able to see him as a separate entity residing in the body and enjoying its activity by identifying himself with it.

### The Supreme Self

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।

यच्चंद्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धिः मामकम् ॥ १२ ॥

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।

पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥ १३ ॥

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ १४ ॥

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि संनिविष्टो

मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च ।

वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो

वेदांतकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥ १५ ॥

*The light which residing in the sun illumines  
   the whole world,  
 And light in the moon and fire that thou  
   knowest to be Mine. 12*

*Pervading the earth I support beings with My  
   energy,  
 I nourish all herbs becoming the juicy moon. 13*

*Becoming Vaishwanara I reside in the bodies  
   of all,  
 Associated with the incoming and outgoing  
   breath I digest the four-fold food. 14*

*I am enshrined in the hearts of all,  
 From Me are knowledge and memory and their  
   absence,*

*By all the Vedas to be known am I,  
 Author of Vedanta and Veda knower am I. 15*

I am the cause and source of the light by which the sun illumines the universe, also the reflected light of the moon and that of fire. All beings inhabiting the earth and drawing their nutrition therefrom are really supported by Me as it is I who pervade the earth and supply the energy for its manifold activity. I provide the requisite juice for the growth of all vegetation. Take again the creatures. How do they grow? By digesting food. But it is My energy which really performs this wondrous phenomenon inside the laboratory of the stomach, as I charge the breath with this energy.

I am seated in the hearts of all. All that men possess of value within them is a manifestation of My glory. Their memory and knowledge is from Me and if in some it is absent, that too is due to My majesty and

power. It is only when soul enters the body that a relation is established resulting in the emergence of knowledge, but I am the cause of the relation. I am the central topic of all the Vedas, to understand them is to know Me. I am the Author of what is beyond the Vedas namely, the *Aranyak* portion of the Vedas which deals with the Unmanifest beyond nature. There is nothing beyond nature besides Myself. I know how I can be known. In this section I have pointed out the means by which man can know Me.

### Final Synthesis

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।

क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥ १६ ॥

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।

यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य विभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥ १७ ॥

*In this world are two categories, the  
changing and the changeless,  
The changing is all manifest objects, the  
immortal is known as the changeless. 16*  
*The Highest Self is another, He is said to be  
the Supreme Self,  
Abiding in the three worlds He sustains them,  
their Imperishable Lord. 17*

There is the universe ever in flux and there is the immutable self. Separate from both is the Supreme who is Master of both. He is beyond the universe though pervading everything. Therefore in the Vedas and by mortal men He is called the Supreme Self (Paramatma).

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।  
 अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ १८ ॥  
 यो मामेवमसंभूदो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।  
 स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥ १९ ॥

*I am beyond changing nature and higher than  
 the immutable self,  
 Hence in the world and Veda I am called the  
 Supreme Self.* 18

*Who free of delusion knows Me as the Supreme  
 Self,  
 He, the whole knower, worships Me in all  
 ways whatever.* 19

Who knowing the three categories severally, knows Him as Master of the other two, ever keeping them under His sway by moving them according to eternal unalterable laws, really worships the Supreme Self in all his actions, as he does not treat them as his own. He treats the body as His gift given for His own purpose, which he faithfully carries out by engaging in non-fruit-regarding activity.

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयानघ ।  
 एतद्ब्रुवा बुद्धिमान् स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ॥ २० ॥

*This most occult teaching has been imparted  
 by Me to thee, O Sinless,  
 Understanding this a man becomes wise and  
 action-freed, O Bharat.* 20

This the last and final doctrine of the Gita has now been imparted to Arjun. If rightly understood it makes a man wise. After this there is nothing left for him to know or strive after, his endeavour for attainment is over. He has arrived at the end of his journey. He moves in consciousness of the Divine, treating all activity as His play. (Chap. IV, Sh. 24).

इति श्रीमद्भगवत्गीतासु ० पुरुषोत्तमयोगो नाम पंचदशोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter XV . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*  
YOGA OF SUPREME SPIRIT



## CHAPTER XVI

### The Godly and the Demonaic

So far Krishna has dealt with the fundamental verities—Self, Supreme and the Universe and the means to attain liberation. He has pointed out how one desiring liberation should act in the world and what attitude he should adopt towards the universe. Finally at the end of last chapter he summed up the whole metaphysic of his teaching by synthesising the three categories into an organic whole. In this Chapter he first sums up the mental content of a godly man—one inclined along the path of liberation and after enumerating the qualities of the demonaic gives a masterly exposition of the working of his mind.

### Virtues of the Godly

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।

दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥ १ ॥

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।

दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥ २ ॥

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।

भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ ३ ॥

**The Lord said—**

*Fearlessness, purity of being, fixity in Yoga of  
 knowledge,  
 Charity, sense-restraint, sacrifice, Scripture-  
 study, austerity, and moral-rectitude, 1  
 Non-violence, truth, non-anger, renunciation,  
 serenity, absence of calumny,  
 Compassion on creatures, non-covetousness,  
 gentleness, modesty and firmness, 2  
 Impressive lustre, forgiveness, fortitude,  
 purity, non-hate, and non-pride,  
 Are the virtues of one born in the godly state,  
 O Bharat. 3*

**Fearlessness**—The self is unperishing and eternal (Chap. II, Sh. 30). His relation with the body is temporary (Chap. II, Sh. 22). So the one fundamental quality of a man of knowledge should be fearlessness. It should be the basis and foundation of the whole of his moral structure within. Until then he cannot be conscious of his true nature—the changeless abiding in the changing body, assured always of a new body according to his deeds. What is fear? It is just a mental representation of some painful result (physical or mental) accruing to the body from an outside agency. But if the effect is on the body only then why is fear present? Because of blind attachment to the body.

**Objection**—But so long as the self is encased in the body, the body is at least useful as a vehicle and needs protection and care. What sin does a man commit if he feels afraid on apprehension of trouble to the body as trouble does obviously interfere with its pro-

per working. It is a feeling which one finds springing within himself quite spontaneously.

**Answer**—Trouble to the body is caused by apprehension of non-satiation of its needs or of those in whom one is interested. All human wants are satisfied by material objects of myriad forms and varieties. They come into existence by the co-operative activity of sentient creatures and all non-sentient material objects and forces of nature. The combined activity of all including his own results in the production of objects which satisfy man's wants and relieve him from fear present or future. Man in his ignorance thinks that the few annas which he pays for a coveted object is the real price of it and that so long as he possesses the few annas he is free from fear of hunger. But this in fact is not so. Let us see why?

The man puts the few annas into his pocket intent on procuring the flour for his meal. He uses the Municipal road—a product of the corporate activity of the citizens—to reach the shop. The shop-keeper to teach him a lesson refuses to sell. He knocks at the wheat seller's, who refuses to sell the wheat. He goes to the station to take the train bound for the village. The Railway company place the services of their huge organisation at his disposal making him grateful to them and realise of what little use the few annas would be without their kindness. At last he arrives at the village. The starving peasant has nothing to sell. Off he goes to the landlord to rent land for cultivation. He agrees. But where is the money—pieces of silver or paper whose value is kept up by the organised force of the community for mutual service expressed through their govern-

ment. Well he wires for it and for a small expenditure gets it through the agency of the telegraph—a huge organisation of co-operative activity. Land taken, where are the seed, the plough and the oxen? Well he gets them from the kind villagers. Cultivation begins. Water is wanted. There is the village well. No, he cannot use it as he has not made it. Depend on rain, yes, but the sun, moon and the wind plead inability to help, because of the demand being made at the wrong time—May. Has he to wait till the rainy season? Who is responsible for the change of seasons? The person in charge of the universe-cycle—the Supreme. He meets the Supreme. He holds him to His bosom and reminding him of his place in the cycle, whose course he wants Him to alter for his sake teaches him that the way to get flour is not to ask Him to change the course of the cycle which is impossible, but to follow the instructions laid down in Chapter III, Shs. 10-17. He is enjoined to have certain confidence that this cycle is moved by Him in the interests of all including himself. Therefore there is arrangement for protection and preservation of his body, but on condition that he offer his activity in the perennial sacrifice of nature according to the law of mutual service without regard of self.

According to the Gita there is previous arrangement for all his wants by a beneficent Creator who Himself supervises the cycle. He has set it in motion for this purpose. All that man need do is to have consciousness of the presence of the Supreme and the true aim of the activity of the universe. Moving in this faith he can have no cause for fear, provided he makes his contribution to the total in the form of selfless action. So

fear is a wholly misplaced emotion, it serves no useful purpose. When man's activity plays only a minor part in satisfying his needs and he does not control the activity of others or influence them for any good, any one out of the myriad agencies whose assistance is necessary for fruition of desire, non-co-operating can give trouble and arouse fear, but he is helpless and the only remedy he has is to act his part with faith. When this is recognised there can be no fear of the morn or the morrow. Fear is the cherished companion of him who is ignorant of the beneficent nature of the universe-cycle and treats manifest nature as all in all and not acting bound by law ordained by a merciful Providence.

Fearlessness is essential for liberation. In fact it is liberation itself. Only one truly free and wise can be really fearless and *vice versa*. It is the cardinal virtue of an illumined self. It is the one accurate measure of man's progress towards his goal of self-realisation. That is the reason why it appears to have been put in the forefront of all godly virtues.

**Purity of being**—Treating the body as a machine only which requires care, diminishes its "*Tam*" quality and non-attachment to it, saves one from blind and injurious activity. It leads to diminution of selfish activity (*Raja*). When these two are thus suppressed then *Satva* rules, leading to light and knowledge.

**Knowledge-Path**—Purity of being leads to knowledge. Reflection on the nature of the eternal verities and judging one's conduct in its light, keeps the mind balanced and saves it from many a pitfall into which

a struggling seeker is tempted from time to time by sense-temptations.

**Charity** is essential because through it man realises his obligation to the world and knows himself to be just a fortunate trustee of his possessions which in fact are the property of the world—the ultimate beneficiary of the store house of nature. He restores to the world what is its own and avoids consciousness of “sin” and blindness to the why of the universe cycle.

**Self-restraint** gives him a consciousness of separation from his body which he manipulates as he desires, and also leads to non-attachment to the objects of sense.

**Sacrifice**—He acknowledges his debt to the forces of nature as essential helpers in satisfaction of his needs. These are active not for self, but for all sentient life without discrimination.

**Scripture-study** keeps him cognizant of his true nature and duties towards the world in daily life as also of immanence of the Supreme within him.

**Moral rectitude** leads to unselfishness and fortifies man in non-attachment to the body and the world, as its opposite takes hold of man only when selfishness rules and there is attachment to the body. It is always out of a desire to protect the body that people resort to lie and deceit.

**Non-violence**—Absence of a desire to kill or injure. The desire to kill or injure arises because of attachment to some desire and aversion to anything which thwarts its even course.

Violence denotes (1) self-blindness: "He who views this as the slayer or the other who treats him as the slain, both are not-knowers, for he slayeth not nor is slain" (Chap. II, Sh. 19), and "who knows this self indestructible, eternal, unborn, unchanging, that person, O Parth, how can he slay or cause to be slain" (Chap. II, Sh. 21). (2) Ignorance of the beneficent nature of the universe-cycle and the place of man's individual activity in satisfying even his own needs. He ignores the contributory activity of the rest of the universe and treats his personal exertion as the sole cause of his possessions, and what he desires to achieve in future. (3) Disregard of the fundamental fact that this universe is governed by law and is not a mere chaos where whatever particular individuals in fits of excitement and passion desire in the way of injuring others would come to pass by their efforts without permanently injuring them in return.

Besides as it violates the very basis of the Universe, it brings its perpetrator into violent conflict with it, which cannot but injure him. Man as part of this elaborate machine can only exist therein safely by conforming to its law and never by violating it. That law is the law of mutual service for preservation of world-harmony (*Loksaṅgrah*).

When all is manifestation of One Supreme Eternal:—"I am the origin and the end of the entire Universe" (Chap. VII, Sh. 6); "all this is strung together in Me like gems in a string" (Chap. VII, Sh. 7), then there is no room whatever left for discrimination or duality. The bodies of both are His gifts operating according to His law. It is only by a denial of His presence and

existence that violence is possible: "In all beings abides equally the Supreme Lord, the Unperishing amid the perishing, who sees this seeth. Because seeing the Supreme abiding equally everywhere of one attitude to all, he does not destroy the self by the self, he reaches the Supreme Goal" (Chap. XIII, Shs. 27-28).

As regards satisfaction of body needs, there is a promise given in no uncertain terms: "Unswervingly meditating upon Me those who worship Me fully, for such abiding-in-Me persons I acquire and preserve" (Chap. IX, Sh. 22). Their commissariat is in charge of a servant, ever vigilant and faithful, none else but the all-powerful, all-knowing Supreme. So for those inclined to liberation, violence in any form is a most fatal poison, it is the very negation of the attitude wherein liberation is possible. Wherever it has found a way in, all talk and thought of liberation is moonshine. It stands for darkness supreme, and therefore cultivation of its enemy, non-violence is virtuous which as it grows is an indication of man's acquisition of true knowledge and realisation of the three fundamental truths as living realities of his mortal existence.

Truth, non-anger, dispassion, calm and no-backbiting, all denote non-attachment to objects of sense and body-affections.

**Compassion** indicates realisation of unity with other creatures (Chap. VI, Sh. 32).

### Attributes of the Demonaic

दंभो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।

अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ संपदमासुरीम् ॥ ४ ॥



*Hypocrisy, arrogance, self-conceit, anger,  
insolence,  
And ignorance, O Pārth, are found in one born  
in the demoniac state.* 4

**Hypocrisy:** deceitfulness+lie, a mixture of the two, attempt to show what one is in fact not. It denotes supreme ignorance of the origin and majesty of the self. A spark from the Divine assumes a body and is called *man*. This body serves the purpose of giving this spark a knowledge of the world without and his own separate existence within his casement. As the body is made up of the stuff of nature and is ever changing, it requires constant replenishing of matter and energy for proper discharge of its functions. The self draws upon nature supply. That is his sole reason for attending to the happenings in nature.

But what takes place when the position is inverted? Instead of the body slaving for its master, the self, to enable him to know Truth, the master forgetting his own existence and in denial of his true attribute of knowledge and illumination slaves for his slave—the body—for its upkeep for its own sake. The self ends in so identifying himself with it that he is involved in never ending activity and enveloped in total darkness. So deep indeed is the impression on consciousness that the self acquires a rooted working belief that there is no such thing as his separate existence aside the body, and that he is no separate category at all.

It is in this state of self-blindness that one self deceives another, his own brother in origin and without much success either, as the other returns the compli-

ment. So this game brings about a false state of existence in which all move in chicanery and deceit denying their true nature and origin. All this is done for the body, because of our voluntary surrender to it. It refuses to consider any claim but its own as worthy of recognition, and any desire but its own as worthy of satiation. Man is proud of its size and form and wants to make it the standard for others who are deemed to exist to serve it and observe the standards he in his vanity lays down. He desires to become the centre of the show and therefore cognizing, what impresses the worshippers and induces others to allow themselves to be manipulated by him, plumes himself suitably and behaves accordingly by adopting an expression suited to the needs of the hour. In other words man seriously becomes a master actor, in the interest of his own slave. He recognises no law governing fruit of action except his own empirical experience and realising the importance and necessity of outside co-operation secures it by the alternatives of lying and deceit, as he is too selfish and lazy to get it in return for his own service. That he regards as an undesirable evil and a weakness, derogatory to his sense of pride. It is obvious therefore that hypocrisy is the fundamental quality of the nature-inclined, for nothing is more calculated to keep him bound to nature than this—the negation of truth and straight-forwardness, the very embodiment of fear. Fear could desire no better instrument for advancing its cause than hypocrisy. Fear is the life-breath of hypocrisy; fear of non-fulfilment of what man has set his heart upon and fear of others not rendering the necessary assistance in carrying out his purposes. Why,

it is fear of existence itself, as it loses meaning if the objects which make it desirable are for some reason unattainable. So it is the other pole, removed farthest from fearlessness the fundamental attribute of a pilgrim on the path.

Arrogance, self-conceit, anger and insolence all emphasise the importance of the body. They lay emphasis on the narrow separated self in contrast with other embodied selves. They are evidence of a desire to exploit others for our narrow pursuits denying them equal right to do so quite unreasonably. They keep man on the war path with his fellow beings and destroying his peace of mind ever keep him bound to grief and sorrow.

दैवी संपद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।

मा शुचः संपदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पांडव ॥ ५ ॥

*The godly state is for liberation and the  
demoniac for bondage,*

*Worry not O Pandava thou art into the godly  
state born. 5*

As Arjun was himself grief-stricken, dejected and disturbed, Krishna assures him not to feel alarmed at this description of vices which bring about grief and delusion, as he is born with tendencies towards the path of liberation.

द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन्दैव आसुर एव च ।

दैवो विस्तराः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु ॥ ६ ॥

*In this world are manifested two types of  
beings, the godly and the demonaic,  
The godly I have dealt with before, of the  
demonaic listen, O Parth, now.* 6

### Their Nature

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।

न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥७॥

*What should be done and what should not be  
done the demonaic understand not,  
Neither purity nor right conduct nor truth  
does one see in them.* 7

The demonaic do not understand the nature of action. When they observe the body acting only in response to the self alone, the idea of a self apart from the body doing nothing but simply watching the play of the *gunas* is something incomprehensible to them. They cannot think of sense-enjoyment dissociated from the self. They take the empirical, unreflective view of life that the self feels joy and sorrow and other body-affections. For them this is no delusion, but man's inherent attribute without which he would not be conscious of his existence. They live on the plane of sense and for what is beyond they care not. Renunciation for them is cessation of all activity, a state of inertia (*tam*).

Universal harmony is an aggregate of individual harmonies, and when parts of the machine follow their own course regardless of the aim of the whole, they cause friction and interfere with the smooth progress of the whole. They cannot be harmonious them-

selves, because their harmonious existence depends upon the co-operation of the rest which is wanting and the whole lacks harmony because of the rebellion of the parts. So they become misfits. Their blind activity results in harm all round, ill serving them even. Such conduct cannot be called right and proper at all, nor is such activity pure, because of disregard of the whole. There is no Truth in them because their activity is rooted in false perverted knowledge. Deluded by the manifestation of nature they miss the Reality which is veiled by it. Attached to the body they only act for its sake, therefore their activity greedy and ignorant as it is can never be right, truthful or pure, as all these qualities demand consideration for the interests of others.

### Their Faith

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।

अपरस्परसंभूतं किमन्यत्कामहेतुकम् ॥८॥

*Without truth, without basis, without God is  
this world, they say,*

*Born of mutual union under lust impulse  
and nought else.*

8

They see the world always changing and are unable to find a basis for it. They are themselves involved in this flux and are unable to advance beyond by reflection to be able to see its basis. They forget that though it is ever changing it is never absent from their view. Changing forms must have a base wherein to inhere. It is like denying the existence of a cinema film on the ground of its changing scenes. Similarly in this change,



mental trait of theirs and limit their intelligence by identifying themselves with the body. Because of this neglect, they fail to recognise the changeless Supreme within objects. On reflection they could not fail to see that the body acts only in response to the orders of a self and really exists for him. On this analogy they should interpret the activity of inanimate objects as due to the Supreme, but their reason is simply a hand-maid of the senses and does not lift them beyond changing phenomena into the region of Reality by reflection.

Ignorant of the self, deniers of the Supreme and law and order in the Universe, selfish, greedy and grasping, without a soft corner for those whose activities without any idea of injury on their part may conflict with theirs they naturally act in slavery to sense and elementary appetites. The activities of others in so far as they conflict or hinder their purposes, however good and wholesome they may be in themselves, are an eye-sore to them. They bend their energy to counter-act them and act as enemies of the world. They bring about great confusion of activity and destroy its harmony, spreading sorrow all round.

### Sh. 10-17. Normal Attitude while Acting

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दंभमानमदान्विताः ।

मोहाद्गृहीत्वाऽऽसद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्ततेऽंशुचित्रताः ॥ १० ॥

*Given over to desires hard to appease, full of  
hypocrisy, conceit and arrogance,  
Through delusion sticking to false notions  
they act, men of unclean resolves. 10*

Desire (*Kāma*) can only be satiated by sense-objects, so it is insatiable, as mere possession does not satiate it, after possession there springs up a desire to continue it for ever which is wholly impossible as it is the nature of sense-objects to change. Then the body state may change creating a desire for corresponding change in the object which can never be fulfilled. But as affection for the object dominates man, therefore, blind to this inexorable principle, he resorts to all sorts of devices to preserve the object. His being is full of hypocrisy, conceit and arrogance. Even partial satisfaction gives him a false sense of importance, turns his head and makes him look down upon his more modest brethren. It is all due to his attachment to the body and disregard of the fact that all souls are rooted in the Supreme.

चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयांतामुपाश्रिताः ।

कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ॥ ११ ॥

*To endless cares spread over to the last moment  
of death, wedded,  
Sense enjoyment is all, of this alone convinced. 11*

Entangled in the network of (gunas) qualities, they are ever absorbed in mutual adjustment of body-change within and nature-change without. These two treacherous friends—body and nature—have thrown a noose round their neck and fill their being with endless cares. This process brings them in perpetual conflict with forces of nature and men including even themselves in the form of prick of conscience. But they learn nothing therefrom and regard sense-gratification, the cause



of all their misery as the summum bonum 'of their existence.

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।

हन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसंचयान् ॥ १२ ॥

- *Chained by ties of a hundred hopes given over  
to yearning and anger,  
They seek to hoard riches for sensual  
enjoyment by unlawful means. 12*

This summum bonum, which has given them the gift of endless cares preserves it for them through hope. This involves them in new desire, and anger at its frustration. In the hope of gratifying desire they hoard wealth heedless of the morality of the means adopted provided they are efficacious. Morality assumes a basis for the universe and the rule of law but that is just what is wanting in it in their eyes. The only glimpse of morality they ever see is, when others voluntarily allow themselves to be exploited by them for their selfish purposes, though even then they on their analogy scent a selfish design in their victim's action.

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिमं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।

इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥ १३ ॥

असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।

ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्मुखी ॥ १४ ॥

आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।

यद्वे दास्यामि मोदिष्ये इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ॥ १५ ॥

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता माहजालसमावृताः ।

प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ॥ १६ ॥

*Today I have got this, and this heart's desire  
shall I fulfil tomorrow,  
This wealth is already mine and this will be  
mine soon. 13  
This enemy is already killed by me and I shall  
kill others too,  
I am lord, enjoyer and perfect, I am powerful  
and happy. 14  
I am affluent and well-born, who is there like  
unto me,  
I shall perform sacrifice, give in charity  
and make merry, by such ignorance deluded. 15  
Confounded by manifold desires, caught in  
the net of delusion,  
Entangled in sense-enjoyments they fall into  
foul hell. 16*

Ever striving for harmony, yet never obtaining it,  
they are wedded to sin and misery here and hereafter.

आत्मसंभाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः ।

यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दंभेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ १७ ॥

*Self-important, self-sufficient, with pride of  
wealth inflated,  
They perform sacrifice in name  
with hypocrisy, ignoring procedure. 17*

God and self they ignore within them and without.  
Body-form they exalt and any difference in mental  
equipment or external means turns their heads. Con-

temptuous of their fellow men, they deny humanity in them. There is no idea of service and their ritualism is to deceive the world and not out of sincerity of belief.

### They Ignore The Supreme

अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः ।

मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषंतोऽभ्यसूयकाः ॥ १८ ॥

*In egotism, power, arrogance, passion, and  
anger pinning faith,  
These cavillers disregard Me abiding in their  
and others' bodies. 18*

Self-centred, puffed up with mental and material power condescending towards the common folk and defiant towards equals and superiors, they consider themselves self-supreme and resent anything having a semblance of belittling their superiority. Such attitude only earns their contempt and ridicule. They recognise no higher authority in their heart of hearts though to keep up appearances and win the plaudits of the crowd they may pose as god-fearing. God to them is just a convenient conception to utilise for advancing their selfish aims. They only see their body machinery which to them is dearer than all else, and live solely for it. Any frustration of their designs in pursuance of sense-enjoyment is visited by bitter and sustained hostility and creates a strong desire to retaliate at an opportune moment. Ill will and anger at all those who appear to them to stand in their way, they consider their chief weapons of warfare by which they attempt to subdue or crush them. Only they and their desires for pampering the body have existence and are real, all else is unreal and

exists to serve them. Those who take a different view are enemies deserving of condign punishment. Such slaves of the body, proud of its mental capacity, proud of its capacity to appropriate sense-objects in abundance for satisfaction of its cravings, proud of the sinister joy it brings them by enabling them to exploit others and play the rôle of the mighty, are too absorbed in self to give thought to Him who is the Creator of this priceless possession of theirs. They place the product on so high a pedestal and ignore the Architect, nay, insult Him by perverting the product to unfair uses and not utilising it for the purpose for which it was placed at their disposal, namely self-realisation. Though so proud of their learning and cunning they are totally ignorant of what takes place inside their laboratory which supplies the energy to impose upon others and of what takes place within the mind which furnishes the ideas and schemes to carry out their purposes. They simply find the machine working and that is enough. They do not enquire into the how and the why of this. Ungrateful slaves to passion and greed, they are breathing automata so far as knowledge of Reality is concerned.

They laugh at all suggestions of the body being a gift of the Divine to them for service. What Divine! The all Powerful! Well we ignore Him and deny His existence, yet we see no evidence of His might visible. And we! well let any one defy us and act against our will, and what would happen, a torrent of abuse and elaboration of schemes to harm and injure the miscreant. This is evidence of our might. You tell us we exploit others and deny them their proper due and threaten us with God's wrath. When is this visitation to appear? God

could avoid this exploitation by 'approaching the exploited who believe in Him and turning them against us. Let Him affect their voluntas. But what do we see, He their Almighty Father, curious Being, far from helping them has given us the means to bend them to our will and use their belief in this superstition for our purpose. It comes handy to us very often. He sits in their bodies, but apparently to further our designs; for believing in Him they act according to our command and place the use of their bodies at our disposal for a mess of pottage. A few annas hire their mouth for swearing falsehood in His name and Presence. A few rupees buy their hands for riot, murder or dacoity. The lure of a post makes them betray their dearest. Nay, they willingly sell their country or community if the bait is tempting enough. And then they defend their action with weapons designed and perfected in our armoury—hypocrisy, deceit, false promise, false alarms and these failing threat of injury, betrayal or mutual dissensions and the like is pressed into service. Yet their Almighty Father is abiding within, looking spellbound at our might and skill without thought of protecting His wards. Of course He is helpless with us, for we are practical people and have no time to waste on superstition. We bring in His name on our lips or quote Scripture to avoid alarming the ignorant and to utilise them. But He certainly ought to do something in the interest of His protégés, if for no other cause than recognition of their faith in Him. But unfortunately for them He helps us against them. What betrayal, thuswise the greedy and the grasping wholly consumed by desire and entangled in the meshes

of this never-ending drama of the Supreme, ignore Him abiding in their within and go their evil ways.

### . The Consequence

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।  
 द्विषाम्यजलमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥ १६ ॥  
 आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।  
 मामप्राप्यैव कौंतेय ततो यांत्यधमां मतिम् ॥ २० ॥

*I these heartless ill-willers, vilest of men,  
 Hurl these evil-doers for ever in demoniac  
 wombs. 19  
 Entering these demoniac wombs deluded birth  
 after birth,  
 Not attaining Me, O Kunti-born, they fall  
 into still lower states. 20*

The Supreme grants the desires of these cavillers. All are ever in quest of happiness. But the actual content varies with each individual according to his mental and moral make up. The god-inclined who regard harmony as ideal happiness look for it in sense-mastery. The nature-inclined, who are attached to worldly enjoyment as ideal happiness look for it in sense-slavery. True it is that this world has been created for sense satisfaction, but only qua body-maintenance for discharge of proper functions, and not satisfaction for its own sake. The purpose has however been perverted by making sense-satisfaction or body pampering the end of existence. Activity and change is inherent in Nature, while the self is changeless and indestructible. A change-

less category is thus caught in the midst of a rapid stream. It tries to give permanence to every thing it looks upon as agreeable, because its desires assume a more or less enduring form. But the 'treacherous body in which the desires inhere does not co-operate and plays false. So this changeless is under the necessity of perpetual adjustment to its changing environment for the sake of its changing charge—the body. There is a desire to stem the tide and regulate the flow. But as every self has a desire to do it, with his own body-affections and peculiar outlook and as his activity ignores the existence of others except for their utility and use to him, there is a tremendous conflict created. The inanimate objects and natural forces following their own laws of action come in conflict with his activity. They work in the interests of all for harmony. But the activities of men are blind, for self only. They find both nature and their fellowmen in conflict with them. With imagination fired by craving, they bend all their energy towards its fulfilment, facing conflict, and cause friction and inharmony. In quest of harmony they succeed in reducing it still further, earning bitter sorrow and disappointment themselves or if successful themselves making others victims thereof. Endless care and anxiety *re* the future is their lot, for, when not striving to obtain, they strive to keep what they have. The only other alternative that of non-attachment to sense-objects and fixation of mind in the Supreme appears uninviting. They relish it not. " It does not touch their imagination and so they muster up still greater energy to continue the fight against their fellowmen and nature to achieve the impossible task of painless

adjustment of the changeless to perpetual change by pampering to the changing body. This places the others on guard. There is greater friction as they also are equally determined to mind their interests which of course clash and so a vicious circle is established. It is a complete tangle. Mind is ever occupied with it. The intensity of craving and hope of satiation form such a complex that there is no desire to leave the arena which has given this misery and worry as precious gifts. Thought of death fills with alarm and there is yet greater attachment to craving. This mortal enemy of peace and harmony, "destructive of knowledge and wisdom", is hugged to bosom at the last moment, and is incarnated in the next body form. "With whatever thought occupying his being at the last moment he sheds off the body, being ever filled with the same he incarnates in that thought" (Chap. VIII, Sh. 6). In this body he gets his old understanding and tendencies and starts to work therefrom along the old lines: "There in (that body) he gets the reason union of the earlier body" (Chap. VI, Sh. 43).

With the old equipment at his disposal he re-starts the fight, removed from Truth yet further. He gets into tighter meshes of care and anxiety, with sorrow and disappointment as their fruit. But as the self is immortal, and cannot conceive of final extinction, therefore thought of death is always repellent. So new hope is created amidst a sea of care and worry. There is yet another effort made, with still greater energy, and more exclusive application to the ideal, resulting in the formation of a mighty complex of ill will and venom towards beings and scepticism towards natural objects



and forces. Other people's success displeases and produces a feeling of disappointment, their failure pleases and feeds their vanity. The joy is of a sinister kind, it makes them revel in others' miseries because it gives them a sense of importance that they are after all not alone in disappointment and that they are at least better than some. The sub-conscious ultimately becomes the seat of evil emotions of ill-will, envy, and despair. Scepticism rules. Even activity (*Raj*), through perpetual disappointment recedes back yielding rein to inertia and darkness (*Tam*). There is only half-hearted endeavour, ambition goes, only the will to live remains, with violence and deceit as its weapons of defence and attack. They come to hold the field by continued attachment to the world, with bitter disappointment at the failure of men and objects to render proper service to them. There is loss of faith in God and His beneficence. As this is universal, there is blind activity all round.

Failing moral weapons because of ignorance of the technique of user, the deluded come to believe in the efficacy of violence and deceit to check the harmful effect of other people's activity and keep the field safe for their own. First adopted as a counter move, they end by becoming the weapons of all. And man the image divine employs speech a gift divine, to call himself an animal, a beast without virtue, living in a universe devoid of virtue, needing redemption from the net he has woven round himself by perverted use of the body—a gift divine. Thus continues the fall of man into lower and yet lower wombs in response to his own desire to please himself by fighting all men and nature who appear to obstruct his greed. The

law by which nature is bound sees to it that the deluded meet their deserts. And as this world of phenomena attachment to which leads them to rebirth is but a partial manifestation of the Supreme, it is He who really ordains their woes in strict consonance with their own desires. Happiness indeed they do hanker after but their activity is perverted and so they enjoy fruit, which is painful. "In action hath thou freedom not in fruit ever" (Chap. II, Sh. 47). They act in violation of this fundamental principle and therefore keen on happiness they stray into grief and sorrow. Their efforts win them an existence ignorant, devoid of faith and full of doubt, which destroys their peace of mind.

### Advice to Arjun

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।

कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥२१॥

*Triple is this door to hell, ruinous of the Self,  
Desire, anger and greed, therefore these three  
thou give up. 21*

**Desire** denotes self-blindness, for the self is without wants. It is the body-case which has wants and they are adequately provided for by the Supreme who has created it and made it the subject of wants.

**Anger** denotes ignorance of the essential unity in source of all selves and bodies. To be angry is to deny God, the Maker of all and equally mindful of the needs of all.

**Greed** is denial of the nature and aim of the Universe-cycle which is satisfying the needs of all sentient life.

The domination of these three envelops true knowledge and creates an attachment to nature which leads to fall as narrated before.

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।  
 आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥२२॥  
 यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।  
 न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥२३॥  
 तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।  
 ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥२४॥

*The man who is freed from these,  
 O Kuntiborn, the three gates of darkness,  
 Works for self-realisation and attains the  
 Supreme Goal. 22*

*Who disregarding the line of this Shastra,  
 Acts at will impelled by desire,  
 Attains neither perfection nor happiness nor  
 the Supreme Goal. 23*

*So let the Shastra be thy authority for what  
 should be done and not done.  
 Knowing the course laid down in the Shastra  
 thou art entitled to act. 24*

Shastra here does not mean the prevalent Smritis or the Vedas. According to Krishna they deal with the triple guna (quality) nature and can only lead to heaven (*swarga*) and not beyond, while the sense of Shloka 23 indicates that he had in view the attainment of the Supreme Goal beyond nature, with which the Vedas

do not deal. "Of the three qualities the Vedas treat, above the three qualities thou grow, O Arjun, unaffected by opposites, ever in thy being rooted untroubled by acquisition and preservation, self-controlled" (Chap. II, Sh. 45). It means the teaching imparted in the Gita. Arjun is enjoined to test all his actions by the doctrines of non-fruit-regarding action and self-surrender. •

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु० देवासुरसंपद्विभागयोगो नाम षोडशोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter XVI . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*  
YOGA OF DIVISION OF THE GODLY AND THE DEMONAIC

## CHAPTER XVII.

### Threefold Faith

अर्जुन उवाच

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः ।

तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः ॥ १ ॥

Arjun said—

*Who disregarding Shastric procedure worship  
full of faith,*

*What is their state, O Krishna, satvic, rajasic  
or tamasic. 1*

*Shastra-vidhi* here means the teaching imparted by Krishna namely, non-fruit-regarding activity in a state of self-illumination. Appreciating this, but finding it difficult of practice, and at the same time seeing the full force of Krishna's argument about sense-indulgence leading to a life of discontent and sorrow, Arjun asks the above question, it arises thus—

Now take a normal man who has no clear notions about this changing world, the self and the Supreme. In the eyes of such a man this Cosmos is not of the nature of a sacrifice divine, in which his activity is an offering. Non-fruit-regarding action for him is not a working proposition operative in daily life. He regards himself as actor and enjoyer and considers fruit of action a result of his activity, often interrupted by some highly mysterious agency operating behind,

as the result is seldom exactly according to plan and wishes are not always fulfilled. He has certain wants; attachment to certain objects and persons appears in him imperceptibly because of body-needs and also because he is a member of a family and society and needs the co-operation of others in his pursuits. This man though ignorant of or unable to follow this teaching labours to gain his wholesome ends not for sense-gratification, but to discharge his obligations to himself and others and at the same time honestly worship God with faith. How would the state of such a man be described, satvic, rajasic or tamasic?

श्रीभगवानुवाच

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा ।

सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु ॥२॥

The Lord said—

*Of three kinds is the faith of body-dwellers  
product of their dispositions,*

*Satvic, rajasic, and tamasic, hearken to it now. 2*

The whole activity of such a man is for satiation of some want or other, the moving force therein is the intensity of desires and his capacity to fulfil them. He puts before his mind's eye a certain end and certain means to attain it. He selects the end as the most desirable and the means as the most efficacious for attaining the same. In both these he has faith (*Sbraddha*).

He determines the end by the state of his knowledge and spiritual development and means by the capacity and efficiency of his body-machinery and his understanding of moral and natural laws.

Normally his activity is for satisfaction of physical needs and sense-gratification, occasionally for mental pleasure and rarely for spiritual satisfaction. The end consists mostly of satisfaction of wants—the three powerful *éshnas* (cravings), *putrēshna* (craving for son), *lokēshna* (craving for name and fame), and *vittēshna* (craving for wealth). Means to attain these are (1) personal exertion, (2) co-operation and assistance of living beings and the mysterious Unmanifest whose knowledge he gathers from his surroundings. He thus adopts the well-trodden course for the purpose in hand. The end or ideal itself is by no means always clear in his mind. Life is but a drift propelled by wants with occasional moral pulls. Sense-activity is shaped according to environment and accords with standards accepted as correct in his social group.

Now when the end and the means remain confined within the four-corners of manifest universe, contemplate as they do the establishment of a relation within it with man as centre, which in his view would realise his desired ideal of happiness, then we must take it that they are subject to the play of the three qualities (*gunas*) of nature and are threefold according to the predominance of the quality operative in them. The faith which keeps man absorbed in them is also *satvic*, *rajasic* or *tamasic*.

In the human body are four principal mental tools—mind, sub-conscious, reason and egoism. All are equally equipped, but the content makes the difference. That too is threefold, giving rise to a state of (i) balanced joy, (ii) ambition and feverish activity therefor or (iii) vegetative existence and heedlessness. The content

is a resulting compound of influences of man's (1) in-born tendencies, (2) study, (3) environment and (4) material resources and position in life. It gives him a certain outlook on life as a whole. Certain motives stir his very being, others leave him cold. Certain means (activities) accord with his temperament, or habitual operation of his organs of action or senses, of knowledge. All depends upon the make up of this content, or to put it differently the contents of the sub-conscious (*chit*) as a reservoir of past impressions which through the operation of memory supplies material at call and the state of education of reason, senses and organs of action are determining factors in the choice of end and means.

Now this totality of sub-conscious content, mind, reason and habitual modes of operation of the ego gives man a definite individuality and fills him with faith in certain ends and means. This faith is practically the sublimation of the contents acted upon by the mental machinery within the ego.

The *satvic* (spiritual minded) look to happiness in mental peace and service to fellow-men. (Mental plane). The *rajasic* look to happiness in ambition and greed and working therefor. (Will plane). The *tamasic* look to happiness in sense-gratification inertia or heedless activity. (Feeling plane).

Each has a more or less clear idea of how his ideal of happiness is attainable by personal activity or acquired knowledge. Both these give him faith in the means to secure the end. These means imply activity which is of three kinds.



These ends and means form the whole content of his personality, and faith therein makes up the whole man. This faith is a true index of his character and disposition. It is that powerful impelling force springing up spontaneously which the mind feels peculiarly its own. It is a product of the content and equipment of his whole being. It is his being ready for action.

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।

श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥३॥

*The faith of each is shaped according to his  
being, O Bharat,*

*This man is made up of faith, whatever his  
faith is that he becomes. 3*

The faith of each man takes its hue and quality from the stuff of his being—his constituting temperament. Its essence lies in holding fast to the end and the means suggested by the Ego. The Ego becomes attached to them through faith. Man's potentiality determines his faith in a given end and this faith then reacts upon this potentiality determining its future course and moulds the being of man in its turn. Both act upon each other. The nature of one gives clue to the other.

Now Arjun when talking of worship quite thoughtlessly assumed that worship could only be of one Supreme God, confusing the nominal homage man pays to a social creation called God with true worship which involves a total surrender of self to his idol. So Krishna after defining faith tells him how this faith determines his object of worship. Because the object is worshiped not for itself but for the sake of the self—for man's

own purpose—so purpose determines the object which would serve it, and purpose is of three kinds. *Vice versa* once the object of worship is chosen whatever it be, the nature of that object would react upon man's faith and affect his whole being.

यजंते सात्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।

प्रेतान्मृतगणांश्चान्ये यजंते तामसा जनाः ॥ ४ ॥

*The Satvic worship the Devas, the Rajasic  
Yakshas and Rakshasas,  
And the tamasic worship Bhuts and Pretas\*. 4*  
**Yaksha:** Brothers of Kuber, lord of wealth.  
**Rakshasas:** Beings of strength and power.

\*“Whose discrimination is enveloped by cravings they worship other Devatas,

Engaging in prescribed ritual driven on by their nature.

Whatever body a devotee with faith wishes to worship,

His unswerving faith therein I render firm.

He full of that faith invokes that form.

And therefrom gains those desires which are really Me-granted.

But the fruit to these men of petty understanding is unenduring.

The votaries of the devas remain with them and My devotees come to Me.” (Ch. VII, Sh. 20-23, p. 301-304).

• “Devotees of other Devas worshipping them full of faith, Also worship Me, O Kuntiborn, in disregard of correct procedure,

As I alone am the Enjoyer and Lord of all sacrifices,

But they know Me not in truth hence fall.

The devotees of Devas go the way of Devas, of Ancestors go the way of Ancestors,

Worshippers of Elements the way of Elements, and My worshippers come to Me.”

(Ch. IX, Sh. 23-25, p. 335-337).

Each selects his object of worship according to the ruling *guna* (quality) of his being.

*Satvic* men worship Vedic gods because they contemplate them possessing attributes of knowledge, purity, love, compassion, justice, benevolence, forgiveness and service of creation.

*Rajasic* men worship the Yakshas and Rakshasas. They are fired with ambition for material prosperity and power and to satiate it they resort to those who would assist them in their design. These are the *Yakshas* and *Rakshasas*, beings whom they contemplate possessing the quality of conferring wealth and power. Whether these exist in fact is a matter of no consequence, the point is that the *Rajasic*, conscious of their own limited power, objectify their keen ambition in an external agency, which keeps their attention concentrated and impels them to bend their energies to the achievement of their end in full faith. The object of worship provides the necessary impetus and gives stability to their activity, no matter whether it exists in fact or not; it is enough that it exists for them.

Similarly *Tamasic* men worship departed beings whom they consider to be living in subtler forms as *Pretas*, and natural elements in forms of their choice. For the *Tamasic* the food casement is all in all. When in plenty, they make merry regardless of consequence, no matter with whom they come in conflict and whose hostility they incur. When they have squandered their riches or if originally in want as most of them are, they attribute their penury to the hostility of their enemies living or dead. They contemplate the dead alive in subtle forms with greater power and quicker movement

than man because of their invisibility. For them they are the enemies now dead or spirits set by their living enemies after them. Pleasure of the *Pretas* becomes the means of attaining happiness, either negatively by stopping their harmful activity or positively by diverting their attention to the living enemies who are considered to be obstructing the way to success. If some considerations lead them to think that the Elements are against them, then they finding them as active and alive themselves, attribute will and judgment to them and proceed to appease them in prescribed forms, with unflinching faith, that their troubles would cease, only if the "*Bhut*" could be got round. There is an if in the likelihood of the devotee's success in pleasing the *Preta* or *Bhut* but none in the resulting consequence of his pleasure. Thus they attribute their misfortunes to the action of dead spirits and the elements and to save themselves from want and disease they as earnestly as the last two devote themselves to *Pretas* and *Bhuts*. Here again actual existence of these is immaterial, for them they exist and provide the requisite impetus and stability to their activity which is supposed to achieve the desired result. The object of worship indicates clearly the nature of the within of the worshipper, the state of his knowledge of reality and moral and spiritual development. His belief in them does not prove their objective existence. But if they do exist, then as natural objects they are part of the cycle bound by its laws and therefore really operated by the Supreme, who alone grants fruits of action to all.\*

\*Worship of entities other than the Supreme generally takes the form of worship of idols as their symbols. But it should not be imagined that any devotee is foolish enough to imagine that

So worship in disregard of the teaching, imparted in the *Gita*, can never lead to liberation and attainment of supreme bliss, in any case whatever. It keeps man, confined to manifest nature and therein his state is determined by the play of the qualities (*gunas*) operative within him.

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः ।

दंभाहंकारसंयुक्ताः कामरागबलान्विताः ॥ ५ ॥

कर्षयन्तः शरीरस्थं भूतप्राणमचेतसः ।

मां चैवान्तःशरीरस्थं तान्विद्ध्युसुरनिश्चयान् ॥ ६ ॥

*Contrary to the teaching who practise terrible  
austerities*

*Wedded to hypocrisy and egoism, worked up  
by the power of desire and attachment, 5*

the piece of stone, hewed or carved by a workman, bestows boons or fulfils desires. For the devotee it becomes a symbol of faith in the Supreme as manifested in the particular entity of which the image is just a mark for the purpose of rivetting attention. The whole value of idol worship lies in the principle of auto-suggestion. The sight of the image recalls to mind all associations which have gathered round the entity under the influence of environment, and produces a powerful impression on the mind. When sufficiently intense it releases any amount of energy in the within of the devotee bringing about transformation of his mentality and character, which changes his outlook on life and attitude towards other men. The powerful mental waves emanating from him affect other men and bring about a change in their outlook towards him, with sometimes very substantial and startling alterations in apprehended results. This though a product of man's own efforts and co-operation of others who have been influenced by his mind-action is attributed to the idol symbolising the entity and strengthens his faith in it.

*These senseless men torturing the aggregate of  
the Elements in the body  
And Me seated within, ye regard of demoniac  
resolves. 6*

There are some who regard body-mortification the proper means to attain the end. This end is generally fulfilment of some desire for sense gratification. By resorting to this with a view to attract the crowd and impose upon it to secure the desire to which they are deeply attached, they really pervert their body activity in utter disregard of the teaching that it should be sacrificed at the altar of world-harmony. They interfere with it by weakening the body as a whole or rendering some organ or other useless, e.g., a hand or a foot. They divert the body from its function of serving as the self's medium of knowledge or his agent for offering his contribution to the service of all. They are heedless about the true nature of the mission of the self on earth, that of self-realisation through the body. They only live for the temporary needs of the body as its slaves in total darkness. They torment their own cherished idol to keep it free from the torment of hunger and thirst.\*

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः ।

यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥७॥

\*These shlokas make it clear that the practices now so prevalent amongst *Sadhus* far from being beneficial to them are a real source of bondage and injurious to the world at large. They are no *Tap*. *Tap* proper (austerity) of body, speech and mind is described in Shlokas 14-19 *infra*.

*Even food dear to all is threefold,  
Also sacrifice, austerity and charity, listen to  
their distinctive features now. 7*

Everything within Nature has its threefold aspect. It leaves its impress upon the being of man. Body is the means by which man accomplishes all his purposes in the world. Its nature and condition has a fundamental effect upon his activities, hence the importance of materials which build it up.

All foods have different properties. Nature of food materially influences the being of man and he feels a desire for particular foods according to his temperament.

### Threefold Food

आयुःसत्त्वबलरोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः

रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥८॥

*Food which promotes longevity, mental peace,  
strength,*

*Health, cheerfulness and considerateness,*

*And is juicy, greasy, long-sustaining and*

*tasteful is dear to the Satvic\*. 8*

Satvic men like food which causes no resistance to the functioning of their being but is easily assimilated into its form. It assists in the maintenance of nervous equilibrium, so essential for meditation, mental clarity and generation of maximum energy for work. It also gives a feeling of satiety and cheerfulness, so necessary for useful service. Food which helps in utilisation of

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\*Wheat, rice, barley, mung, arhar, gram, milk, butter, sugar, rocksalt, almonds, fresh ripe fruits, pumpkin, parwar, torai, plantain, brinjal, etc.

time in study, meditation, writing, reflection or even wholesome rest to the body when within doors, and in developing maximum energy, attention, mental agility and good cheer when out of doors is *satvic*.

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः ।

आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः ॥६॥

*Bitter, sour, salty, very hot, pungent, dry and  
burning,*

*Pain, grief and disease-giving foods are dear to  
the Rajasic\*. 9*

Food which keeps one excited and full of craving now for one and then for the other, so that the mind is always restless in endless schemes, to satisfy the palate or other powerful craving is *rajasic*.

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत् ।

उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम् ॥१०॥

*Cold, unsavoury, foul-smelling and stale,  
Rejected and impure food is dear to the*

*Tamasic†. 10*

Food which just serves to keep body and soul together, irrespective of its utility for generating mental or physical energy in man and which others are willing

\**Puri, Kachori, fried bread, curd, sweets, lemon, potato, bhindi (ladies fingers), karela, onions, garlic, carrots, urd, masur, sesame, bitter and pungent condiments, lean flesh, fish, eggs, wine, tea, coffee, cocoa, betels, tobacco, fruit mixed with condiments, etc.*

†*Ganja, bhang, opium, cocaine, charus, chandoo, all rajasic food which has become stale, juiceless or rotten; onions, garlic, meat, fish and eggs in hot climates; too ripe fruits, etc.*



to part with in lieu of manual labour or otherwise, because of its uselessness to them, and which the recipient compelled by body-craving accepts in resignation as his lot in an inhospitable world is called *Tamasic*. It is food by which the *Tamasic* manage to keep the physical body moving in disregard of mental tools which remain starved. There is little occasion for their use because of the tendency of the *Tamasic* to do the minimum exertion possible and act along the line of least resistance.

### Threefold Sacrifice

अफलाकांक्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते ।

यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः ॥ ११ ॥

*Sacrifice performed as enjoined, by men who  
desire no fruit,*

*With the mentality that "sacrifice is a duty"*

*is satvic. 11*

Man appropriates grains, butter, fresh fruits, vegetables, pure water and other natural products and returns back to nature nothing better than urine, excreta, cough, phlegm, and poisonous perspiration. All these foul the atmosphere and make it injurious to life. Sacrifices for purification of the elements are but a poor return for what service they render to us. In fact it is really service to ourselves as purification does not bring them any personal gain. The ritual prescribed for their performance is so designed as to give the performer of the sacrifice an opportunity to serve the learned Veda-knowing Brahmans and help the needy by means of gifts so as to relieve them from the worry of interrupt-

ing their work of study and meditation in search for food and clothes. He gets an opportunity to serve society in this way by feeding a class of men who are devoted to learning only.

अभिसंधाय तु फलं दंभार्थमपि चैव यत् ।

इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम् ॥१२॥

विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं • मंत्रहीनमदक्षिणम् ।

श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते ॥१३॥

*With a view to gain fruit or for ostentation,  
Sacrifice performed, O best of Bharats,  
know to be rajasic. 12*

*Unmethodical, without distribution of food,  
Mantras or gift,  
Sacrifice performed without faith is called  
tamasic. 13*

### True Austerity

#### (i) Body

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम् ।

ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ॥१४॥

*Worship of God, the twice-born, preceptor  
and the learned, cleanliness, uprightness,  
Continence and harmlessness is called austerity  
of the body. 14*

Body has been gifted to man that he may realise his eternity and relation to the world and the Supreme. Outward activity gives indication of man's within. To use the body for worship of the Supreme—its Creator,

good men who have regenerated themselves by meditation on *Gayatri* (page 364 *supra*), the preceptor—his own guide to the true path, and the wise men; to keep it clean to ensure its efficiency; to keep the organs of action upright in dealings with others—all lying and deceit is because of slavery to the body which is due to ignorance of the relation it bears to the self; to keep the organs under restraint so that they may perform those functions for which they have been gifted by the Supreme and not employ them to injure others, indicates internal illumination. By these means (body-austerity) theoretical learning of the relation of the self with the body as a chariot gifted by the Supreme for maintaining world harmony takes practical shape and serves to make man self-illuminated in fact.

### (ii) Speech

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।

स्वाध्यायाभ्यासनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥१५॥

*Inoffensive words true, soothing and helpful  
Also regular study of Scriptures are called  
austerity of speech* 15

Speech is notice to men about man's within and his attitude towards them in manifold worldly relations. To use inoffensive, truthful, sweet and helpful words while addressing others indicates that his within is illumined with the knowledge that all men are sons of one Supreme Eternal equally dear to Him and that all feel pleasure and pain like himself. (p. 227, 275). He dare not offend his own brother in origin, deceive him by lying, hurt him by unpleasant expressions and use

words which are likely to injure him, as all these serve to envelop his true knowledge with ignorance and make him blind to reality.

### (iii) Mind

मनःप्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।

भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते ॥१६॥

*Mental serenity, benevolence, silence,  
self-control,  
And purity of being is called mind austerity. 16*

Senses are most powerful and turbulent (Ch. II Sh. 60), if left to themselves they make man an abject slave to sense-objects and worldly relations. Mind has been gifted by the Supreme to serve as reins to keep them under control. Nature of sense-action obviously enjoins serenity in the controller and co-ordinator (mind), otherwise, the senses would dash man against the rock of temptation. To be tranquil is to be one's own master.

To adopt an attitude of charity and benevolence towards the shortcomings and faults of others is to recognise man's weakness against the allurements of the world of sense, it saves man from himself falling into error of a like nature.

Garrulousness gives false hopes, raises false alarms and leads to misunderstanding without gain to anybody. It serves to create an atmosphere unsuitable for proper nurture of the self. It also denotes lack of control. To be reticent is to avoid all this and ensure harmony. Self-control is necessary to avoid manipulation of the

body by the senses which are prone to temptation by sense-objects. Self-regarding impressions due to sense-indulgence, and emotions like ill-will, jealousy, hatred and anger pollute a man's being. They find room when sense-activity is not under the control of mind. To keep one's being pure is to escape from the thralldom of these polluting emotions. True austerity is performance of their proper functions by the organs of action and the mind.

When activity proceeds from a vivid consciousness of the true nature of the self and the body, and his relation to the Supreme and the world without, then it brings man nearer his goal of self-realisation—the primary aim of the three austerities aforesaid.

### Three Kinds of Austerity

श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत्त्रिविधं नरैः ।  
 अफलाकांक्षिभिर्युक्तैः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते ॥१७॥  
 सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दंभेन चैव यत् ।  
 क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्रुवम् ॥१८॥  
 मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः ।  
 परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥१९॥

*This threefold austerity practised in full faith  
 by men  
 Not desiring fruit, with devotion, is called*

*satvic. 17*  
*Austerity for suitable welcome, honour,  
 worship and show  
 Performed is called rajasic, unsteady and  
 unenduring. 18*

*Austerity practised out of foolish notions, for  
self-torture*

*Or for ruining another, is declared to be*

*tamasic. 19*

### Threefold Charity

दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।

देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥२०॥

*"Giving is a duty" charity given thus to one  
not serving in return*

*With due regard to place, time and worth of  
recipient is called satvic\*. 20*

\*Instances of Satvic charity:—

1. Widow's homes and orphanages.
2. Helping women and children otherwise.
3. Victims of unforeseen calamities and accidents like earthquake, flood or famine.
4. Helping the decrepit.
5. Establishment of rest-houses (*dharmshalas*), public halls and libraries.
6. Establishment of schools to equip the youth for proper discharge of their duties as members of society and live a clean and honest life in consciousness of their true nature and relation to the world and their Maker.
7. Construction of wells and places for supply of drinking water to men and animals in hot countries.
8. Distribution of wholesome elevating literature, e.g., Gita, Upanishads, prayer books, etc.
9. Hospitals for men and animals.
10. Scholarships for research and advancement of science.
11. Schools (*Pathshalas*) for real moral and spiritual education and preservation of religious literature and turning out men of character who can serve society by their special knowledge of scripture by discourses and save it from misguided charity, waste of wealth in fruitless ritual, immoral and dishonest gains in business

This world is made for all and not for particular individuals. Its enjoyments are meant for all and not for the favoured few. Regarding its wealth and utilities the true principle has been laid in Chapter II, Shs. 9-16, that they come into existence by the joint labour of all and all are co-sharers therein by right. An individual may happen to possess them and have control over them. But that control is to be exercised in the interests of all. Contrary attitude is condemned in no uncertain terms, "their gifts returning nought who uses is in truth a thief." It is a species of misappropriation, a breach of trust for man to have a proprietary mentality in his possessions beyond what he actually needs. And the extent of the needs is indicated in clear language, "dedicated leavings they eat, the saints are saved from every sin." He is to keep the irreducible minimum for his wants, for as an illumined self he should know that all this is to keep the body-engine in a state of high efficiency. Beyond this it is wrong to go as he would then become a slave of his senses which is deprecated in unambiguous language, "on the wheel so set in motion who doth not mould his action, of wrongly guided life, revelling in sense-delights, O Parth, he lives in vain."

Everything that anyone possesses beyond his needs is really not his property, but that of all beings. He is a mere licensee and custodian, thereof. But the

or anti-social business pursuits and set an example of contentment and selfless service of fellowmen as enjoined in Chapter IV, Shloka 9 (p. 204) and Chapter XVIII, Shloka 68-69 (p. 540) even when living as householders.

12. Assisting real *yogis* and *sannyasis* in their task of personal development by arranging for their necessities and that of service of society, by donations.

pleasure and satisfaction which this possession gives him and freedom of disposal the law leaves to him makes his responsibility very onerous indeed. The fundamental aim of the Universe is harmony. In universal harmony alone can individuals hope to have peace within, the only source of true joy. All efforts therefore should be directed to maintain it.

This world is a huge assemblage of humanity, the parts are delicately adjusted and always in varying wants, having new situations to face. It, therefore, becomes a matter of fundamental importance to the trustee how to utilise the funds at his disposal to preserve harmony. The parts continue getting dis-jointed because of indulgence in harmful activities or the effect of natural forces (earthquake, floods, etc). It requires great powers of observation and exercise of judgment on his part to select the most deserving out of the many clamouring for consideration with due regard to time and place. The world being in motion, perpetual adjustment of the parts is necessary as in the case of a machine. Vastness of its expanse and complicated nature of the needs of the parts makes the task one of unusual difficulty. If any mistake is committed and wrong parts helped, then the result is disharmony which makes choice sinful and a cause of bondage. Therefore a *satvic* man not only regards charity as restoring to the world what in effect belongs to it, relieving him of responsibility, but is careful about the object through which he seeks relief from the responsibility of custody. Selecting an object, which on getting assistance brings about friction in other parts by its activity or causes mal-adjustment, would be a very bad discharge of duty.



Therefore in his choice of object he should have regard to its suitability with reference to 'place and time. The most needy person or object, in a place meriting the greatest consideration, on an occasion calling for immediate attention is the test of suitability. It is a very careful weighing of the merits and usefulness to society of the various alternatives clamouring for relief and then selecting the most deserving.

In considering the object regard must be had to its claim on ground of its obligation upon him as a member of a particular organisation or locality. The first claim is of the environment in which the man has grown and lives. It should be made so, that all grow into full manhood therein. To secure this end it becomes necessary to keep a finger on all possible activities—social, educational, religious, economic and political—which are maintained by charity.

यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः ।

दीयते च परिक्रिष्टं तद्दानं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥२१॥

*Charity given expecting a return or with an eye to fruit*

*Or reluctantly is called rajasic\**

21

\*Illustrations of Rajasic charity:—

1. Contributions to party funds for political or other propaganda or giving part-time service to get a name, social position, lucrative job, or expansion of business.

2. Contributions to educational and social institutions for the sake of name without regard to their utility but assuming it because of its being the fashion of the day.

3. Religious charity to get a name for piety.

4. Contributions to institutions and relief funds under official

The *rajasic* have a proprietary mentality in their possessions. They treat them as their exclusive property, and as they ignore the part played by the contributory service and co-operation of others in their gains, they do not feel called upon to part with what they deem to be their hard earned savings, for the good of others, unless they see some personal benefit to themselves. For them it is a fine calculation of the quantum of gain in keeping the money in their coffers or getting its *quid pro quo* if given away in charity. So they experience difficulty in parting with present possessions in expectation of a future gain in cash or kind. The main consideration with them is not whether the object of benefaction will do uniform good to society as such, but whether it would secure the desired result for them. It is generally with a view to personal advancement in the shape of name, fame, social prestige or pecuniary patronage to get titles or secure jobs.

5. Other charities made solely with a view to feed vanity among men of his class without regard to the utility of the object of benefaction.

6. Contributions to missionary bodies or stipends to religious divines ostensibly for religious purposes but really to gain political or economic advantage.

7. Founding hospitals, schools and public institutions in memory of officials to curry favour of those in authority without regard to its unwholesome effect upon the mentality of the people at large.

8. Money spent on pilgrimages and construction of temples for perpetuating family name or helping favourite priests.

9. Opening of Sanskrit schools (*pathshalas*) on the old lines without regard to change of times and circumstances necessitating corresponding alterations, which gives artificial vitality to a decaying class which renders no useful service to society but sets an example of ungrateful greed and selfishness.

gain that they part with wealth after great persuation and as an obligation on the persons demanding it. If the objects of benefaction are popular and in fashion, exciting public admiration, they blindly contribute to them heedless of what the consequences may be in the long run. This is illustrated by modern educational institutions which have brought learning of a sort within the reach of many and have created problems which defy solution by imparting useless lettering to a large class of citizens whose services do not command a ready market and who because of the neglect of the moral and the spiritual factor in them lead a life of great discontent and worry which retards their growth and affects their outlook on life turning them into more or less useless members of society.

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।

असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥२२॥

*Charity given in a wrong place at an  
inopportune moment*

*Without proper reception to an unworthy  
person with scorn is called tamasic\*. 22*

\*Instances of Tamasic charity:—

1. Gifts to priests at places of pilgrimage knowing well that the same are wasted in intoxicants and debauch and maintain a whole class of fairly intelligent men as idlers without any incentive to mental or spiritual advancement, which has a most disastrous effect upon society.

2. Gifts to temples knowing well that the same are spent by the priests and managers in luxurious living and feeding whole regiments of vagabonds and good-for-nothing fellows.

3. Donations to *Muths* knowing full well that the same become capital for the *mahant's* money lending and zamindary

A good many benefactions of the *rajasic* class are anti-social in the long run, which discovery is made after the evil has become sufficiently obtrusive to the eye. In the permanent interest of society great care should be taken to avoid contributions for purposes which have anti-social results in the long run. But more important than all it is necessary to guard against professional mendicancy or deceptive piety which produces a most unwholesome effect upon society by causing

business, income whereof is utilised for the immoral and luxurious living of the head or feeding the army of *chelas*, majority of whom consists of those kidnapped in early childhood, runaways from home, absconders from justice or lazy blackguards who do not want to work for a living and bring the *Sadhu* dress in disgrace and make men scoffers of men of genuine learning and piety.

4. Donations to itinerant *sanyasis* who are dismissed servants, absconders or runaways from home and as bad as any householders. By trading upon peoples' respect and regard for the yellow robes they amass little fortunes or secure enough money to gamble on the turf.

5. Feeding healthy stalwart professional beggars.

6. Maintenance of persons who as religious preachers spread ill-will and hatred, foment communal strife and by making invidious comparisons between creeds or doctrines divert men's minds from pursuit of the path of virtue and clean living to observance of external forms of their denomination or creed.

7. Starting feeding places for men who bring knowledge itself into disgrace by wasting life in acquiring what is necessary for their livelihood which is gained by deceiving the householders (the nominally lettered priest and the astrologer).

8. Wasting money in feasts to professional *sadhus* and beggars.

9. Giving daily alms to strong, healthy, unlettered, professional beggars who turn their daily collections in kind into cash.

10. Helping professional agitators who under cover of protecting religion or culture foment class hatred or communal strife which harms every one except themselves and those they are interested in.

a vast amount of potential human energy run to waste by non-user and diversion of funds from objects rendering useful service, to maintaining whole masses of men in idleness and hypocrisy. It is offering temptation to persons of a *tamasic* mould to live on others. In this form such charity becomes a most heinous crime, as the donor restrains the recipient from striving for self-improvement through the hard knocks of life by strewing his path with tempting thorns. He makes the disease worse and brings about mal-adjustment and inharmony. Constant indulgence makes him blind to the essential aim of the universe and his relation to the wealth he possesses. He forgets the idea of custody and instead of exercising judgment to discharge a duty he ruled by emotion and feeling begins to impose an obligation. It gives him a false idea of his sojourn in this world and he begins to look for relief from his troubles and sorrows in wrong directions. The path to progress in the beyond becomes darkened by this misguided activity. Far from saving from sin it involves him in greater sin. His real interest should lie not in individual persons but in the harmony of the whole. If an individual is maladjusted, the cycle would throw him away. Any attempt on our part in the contrary direction only causes friction and does good to no body including the individual in question. Feeding the body is not an end in itself unless it be to assist the self in utilising it for self-improvement. If charity does not realise this then it is not only a dismal failure, but a positive disservice, for it is an invitation to the *tamasic* not to work, but profit by the labour of others by resort to such hypocrisy and deception as would net-in the unwary through the back door of pity

and compassion. The trust has failed and the man has become a thief, for he is not returning back the gift to the *devas* who in their mercy on the non-co-operating *tamasic* award them pain to enable them to mend themselves. Blinded by desire to reap gain and happiness through the misfortune of others, he acts in violation of the principle on which the cycle is based and brings about disorder and confusion. He ushers in hypocrisy and deceit in human conduct in place of truth. He assists the self-blind to rot in their blindness and makes it more difficult for them to utilise the body for the purpose for which it was given them.

ओं तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।

ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥२३॥

तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः ।

प्रवर्तते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥२४॥

*Aum, Tat, Sat, is regarded as the triple  
designation of Brahman*

*By whom, Brahman-knowers, Vedas and  
Sacrifices were brought into being at  
creation. 23*

*So Sacrifice, charity and austerity by reciting  
Aum*

*Are commenced ever according to procedure  
by the Brahman-knowers. 24*

**Brahman-Vadin:** The knowers of Brahman, who have given up the I mentality in action. For them every activity is a manifestation of Brahman. Their view of sacrifice is as indicated in Chapter IV, Shloka 24 (p. 221, *supra*): "God the act of offering,

God the oblation is offered in God-fire; Brahman verily is reached by them who meditate upon the activity of Brahman," or as indicated in Chapter IX, Shloka 16 (p. 331): "I am Kritu, I am Sacrifice, I am Swadha, I am the herbs, I am Mantra, I am butter, I am fire, I am the act of Sacrifice." They have lost all sense of duality, for them Vasudeva is this all in truth and in fact. It is a live truth for them (p. 299).

**Aum**\* stands for the Supreme operating His individual forms. In contemplating Aum diversity due to nature is ignored and basic unity of objects as emanation from One Supreme Energy is emphasised. Sacrifice, charity and austerity in this contemplation are regarded as His play and the man considers himself without action (*kritikritya*): "All actions by the mind renouncing the restrained embodied dwells at ease in the nine-gated city, neither acting nor causing to act," (Ch. V, Sh. 13, p. 243 *supra*).

Those who live in god-consciousness commence sacrifice, charity and austerity with the mentality of a *gunateet*, they perform them as *duteous actions*. They are merged in the Supreme and treat their body activity as due to Him.

तदित्यनभिसंधाय फलं यज्ञतपःक्रियाः ।

दानक्रियाश्च विविधाः क्रियन्ते मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः ॥२५॥

*Reciting Tat, unmindful of fruit, sacrifice,*  
*austerity*

*And charity of manifold varieties are per-*  
*formed by Seekers of Liberation. 25*

\*For discussion of its meaning see p. 364 *supra*:

**Tat:** It is Brahman manifested as seemingly divided in diverse objects of nature. It is contemplated as Him, an entity separate from the devotee.

**Moksha-akanshi:** Seekers of Liberation. They have the I mentality in action. They recognise duality inasmuch as they are desirous of attaining something from which they regard themselves separate. For them Brahman is Him, with whom they desire to unite in order to reach the state of the Brahman-Vadin. They are conscious of diversity in nature, have their being in it but seek to realise the basic unity. They act but without desire for fruit as that would save them from the necessity of assuming a body and enable them to lift themselves into Brahman-consciousness.

Seekers of Liberation perform the aforesaid acts without desire for fruit as they want to attain the state of Brahman consciousness.

सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते ।

प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्यं युज्यते ॥२६॥

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते ।

कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥२७॥

*In the sense of reality and goodness is Sat used  
Also for an auspicious act, O Parth,*

26

*Devotion to sacrifice, charity and austerity is  
called Sat*

*And action for His sake is also designated as*

*Sat.* 27



**Sat-Bhava:** The reality beneath the everchanging forms of nature. This universe is perpetually in a state of flux, but is never non-existent. There is a substratum in which the changing forms inhere. This substratum is Sat. It has being and remains changeless in the three periods past present and future.

**Sadhu-Bhava:** 'An attitude of harmony with nature. This is also called Sat., Even though forms be changing if the change is without friction then the movement of the world-cycle is according to the plan of the Maker and therefore Sat.

Meritorious action is Sat: Here the man has subjected himself to the play of the qualities. But there is a desire for activity to be Satvic, that it should in no case cause friction or prove injurious to other parts. This is the state of goodness while living within the domain of the qualities of nature and activity resulting therefrom is auspicious.

These three are denoted by Sat because there is recognition of reality behind personal activity and personal existence as an embodied self and both are in harmony with the substratum of changing forms. They are essential for harmonious operation of the world-cycle.

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत् ।

असंक्रियुच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह ॥२८॥

*Whatever is sacrificed, given, done or practised  
as austerity without faith  
Is called Asat. O Parth, and is fruitless here  
and hereafter. 28*

**Asat:** That which changes form, and has no permanent existence. It does not mean non-existence as such. The effect is there but it is transient.

All acts including these three performed without agency mentality or forsaking desire for fruit or with the motive of preserving universal harmony have enduring fruit, but when performed without faith under pressure of immediate necessity, to ward off trouble or satisfy a craving are Asat in their nature and yield no lasting benefit to anybody.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु० श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगो नाम सप्तदशोऽध्यायः ।

*End of Chapter XVII . . . Sung by the Lord Designated*

YOGA OF THREEFOLD FAITH

## CHAPTER XVIII

### Liberation in Renunciation

अर्जुन उवाच

संन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम् ।

त्यागस्य . च हृषीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन ॥ १ ॥

Arjun said—

*I desire, O mighty-armed, to know  
the essence of Sannyas,  
And of Tyaga separately, O Lord of senses,  
O Slayer of Madhu.*

श्रीभगवानुवाच

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं क्वयो विदुः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं . विचक्षणाः ॥ २ ॥

त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिणः ।

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे ॥ ३ ॥

The Lord said—

*Renunciation of desire-impelled action  
is called Sannyas by the knowing,  
Abandonment of fruit in all actions  
is called Tyaga by the wise.  
All actions are impure and should be  
renounced, say some wise men,  
Sacrifice, charity and austerity should not be  
renounced, say others.*

### Krishna's Conclusion

निश्चयं शृणु मे तन्न त्यागे भरतसत्तम ।  
 त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविधः संप्रकीर्तितः ॥ ४ ॥  
 यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।  
 यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥ ५ ॥  
 एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।  
 कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥ ६ ॥

*Listen to My conclusion about this Tyaga,  
 O best of Bharats,  
 Tyaga, O tiger-man, is said to be threefold. 4  
 Sacrifice, charity and austerity should not be  
 renounced, but performed,  
 All these have a purifying effect on the wise. 5  
 But these actions too renouncing attachment  
 and fruit,  
 Should be performed this, O Parth, is My  
 certain and inmost conviction. 6*

**Yajna**—Vedic sacrifice. Here its meaning is not the same as in Chapter III, Shloka 9 or 16. That is the reason why the further condition of non-attachment is added to make it valuable for liberation.

**Sacrifice** centralises the idea of man's harmony with the forces of nature which are ever active in the interest of all.

**Charity** centralises the idea of others having a claim in our so-called earthly possessions and our being trustees thereof for the use of fellow-beings to help

them forward towards the goal of self-realisation for which purpose the principle of co-operation has been made inherent in all beings:

**Austerity**—control of body, mind and speech—centralises the idea of separation of the undying self from his tenement and control of senses against the temptations of sense-objects.

These three amidst the tangle of daily activity bring man in touch with the fundamental truths of existence and lift him from the bondage of the sense-world into thought of the Divine, they have a purifying effect upon life, but only if performed without desire for fruit, else they lose their educative value and are reduced to the level of other activities of daily life for the sake of personal gain. Non-attachment alone imparts to them their educative value.

### Three Kinds of Tyaga

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।

मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥७॥

*Renunciation of dutious action is not*

*proper,  
Its abandonment because of delusion is called  
tamasic.* '7

**Dutious action\***—Action performed without attachment in the interest of world-harmony (*Lok-sangrah*).

Act man must, if he does not act in the aforesaid attitude, he will live for himself utilising the world's

\*The subject is discussed in detail on pages 110 to 137 *supra*

energy for satisfying his elementary needs. Thereby he deprives himself of the opportunity to serve others. Such renunciation in which man acts only under the impulsion of animal needs with reluctance, but has no desire to act for any other consideration is called tamasic.

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्त्यजेत् ।

स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥८॥

*Action involves pain so thinking who afraid  
of troubling the body renounces it,  
On such rajasic renunciation he does not enjoy  
the fruit of renunciation. 8*

Every one is in quest of pleasure and is keen on avoiding pain and sorrow. Each one acts to obtain happiness but gets greater hunger for worldly possessions without regard to the misery of others, bringing about an atmosphere of discontent and poverty, which even reacts upon him. The net result of activity is a long pervading net of dissatisfaction with one's lot and a feeling of void and unhappiness making each look on the other as a selfish, greedy, grasping, and heartless person without feeling for others, out to exploit the world in his interest and yet not getting happiness. Each feels happy in getting maximum service out of others and giving the minimum in return. To secure the object each imposes upon his fellow-beings first by his own artifice and failing that by pressing his caste, community, religion, nation, or government into service. He ignores the equal claim of others to live and grow like him but concentrates upon his growth at the cost of others,

gaining nothing but sullen ill-will and class tension which mar his happiness. Man from his own experience or example of others concludes that the result of all activity is painful to the body and treating it as the root cause decides to renounce action. But it is a futile course to adopt. It is nothing more than retiring from the active line into the background and living on the bounty of active soldiers without rendering any service in return. Both parties are sinners, he who maintains such a man, as it is charity to an unworthy person (*kû-pâtra*) and he who lives on such alms, as he lives for the body, a temporary tenement gifted by the Supreme that he may know himself by its means.

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन ।

संगं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः ॥६॥

*It ought to be performed so viewing who  
performs duteous action, O Arjun,  
Renouncing attachment and fruit, that  
renunciation is called Satvic. 9*

### A True Tyagi

न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते ।

त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी द्विजसंशयः ॥१०॥

*Who has no aversion to a displeasing act or  
attachment to a pleasing act,  
He is a satva-pervaded wise and firm Tyagi. 10*

Satva is existence in equilibrium. It is comparable to the state of an ocean remaining calm amidst stormy waves. A *satvic* person does not lose his balance but

treats the happenings of life as inevitable phases of existence. Fruit of action gives rise to a feeling of attachment or aversion. A *tyagi* who has renounced fruit of actions puts up patiently with body affections. He lives in his being in equilibrium as the substratum of surges of feeling caused by the action of changing nature. Act he must as an embodied self, but he so trains himself that its affections do not disturb him. He does not feel disturbed by the effect of nature on the bodies of others and he adopts a like attitude towards his own body. He realises the truth that "the embodied is constant and undying in bodies all, O Bharat." (Ch. II, Sh. 30).

नहि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः ।

यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥ ११ ॥

अनिष्टमिष्टं मिश्रं च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम् ।

भक्त्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु संन्यासिनां क्वचित् ॥ १२ ॥

*It is not possible for the embodied to  
totally cease all action,  
But the renouncer of fruit of action is  
called a Tyagi. 11*

*Good, bad and mixed is the threefold fruit  
of action,  
For the non-renouncers after death, but not  
for the renouncers. 12*

The action of a renouncer does not generate desire, or attachment thereto, therefore after death he is not born again. But whose activity is desire-filled, they enjoy the fruit of their activity according to the nature



of desire which may be *satvic*—wishing one's own good without injury to others; *rajasic*—desiring one's own good regardless of its effect upon others; *tamasic*—wishing to stave off the trouble of the moment as an alternative to unbearable body suffering at the cost of present injury to others and future trouble to self.

### The Actor-Complex

पंचैतानि . महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे ।  
 सांख्ये कृतांते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥ १३ ॥  
 अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।  
 विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पञ्चमम् ॥ १४ ॥

*These five causes, O mighty-armed, you learn  
 from Me,  
 As laid down in Sankhya for performance of  
 all actions. 13*

*Body, actor and the various organs,  
 Separate manifold functions and Daiva  
 the fifth. 14*

**Karana**—Senses of knowledge and action and the mind.

**Karta**—The Self.

**Cheshta**—Play of energy in the organs and senses while in action.

**Daiva**—The sun, moon, earth, fire, water, ether, (*akāśh*), stars and planets; in fact the whole world as a manifestation of the Supreme (Daiva).

Absence of any of these factors would make action impossible.

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्म प्रारभते नरः ।

न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः ॥ १५ ॥

तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः ।

पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वाच्च स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥ १६ ॥

*Whatever action with body, tongue or mind  
a man performs,*

*Whether just or unjust these five are its causes. 15*

*It being so who the self alone as actor  
Sees through untempered reason*

*He of perverted mind does not see. 16*

The self is utterly helpless without these factors. But they act bound by the laws of nature. Change is inherent in them. When the self decides on renunciation of action imagining thereby that the body would cease activity, he does not know what he is doing. He may influence his own self but cannot alter the nature of the other factors. They cannot cease activity to suit his whim. They will go on acting according to their nature unaffected by his resolution. So, all that is possible for him to do is to adopt a definite attitude towards body-activity. His normal mood is one of attachment to it. As an actor he treats it as his activity. This outlook he can change. He can give up the notion of agency. When he has affected this change, the other factors will go on as usual, only their action will be non-fruit-regarding. But his presence is necessary,

without him sitting within, activity would cease in that form\*.

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।

हत्वापि स इमाल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥ १७ ॥

*Who is without I-act mentality and whose  
reason is not affected,  
Even though killing creatures, he kills not and  
remains unbound. 17*

Though he has given up the idea of agency, the other factors are active moved by the Supreme. So the act of killing itself, in his case, becomes one necessary for world-harmony. Only self-regarding action disturbs harmony and this is not the case with him. His killing without desire is like the killing of the hangman and the judge who are both disinterested instruments of death on behalf of the community for preservation of its harmony. He knows that the self is not destroyed on body destruction (Ch. II, Sh. 20).

### Action Complex

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।

करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥ १८ ॥

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः ।

प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु, तान्यपि ॥ १९ ॥

\*This shloka makes it clear that *Sannyas* is change of attitude towards body activity and not its cessation. This is the significance of the teaching in shloka 11, *supra*.

*Knowledge, known and knower are the  
threefold impulse to action,  
Actor, instrument and action are the  
threefold basis of action.* 18

*Knowledge, action and actor are threefold by  
difference of qualities,  
According to Sankhya, to these also listen duly.* 19

In all voluntary activity cognition precedes action.  
The constituents of both are influenced by the qualities  
(*gunas*) of nature and are accordingly of three kinds.

### Threefold Knowledge

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ २० ॥

*By which he sees One Indestructible Reality  
pervading all beings,  
The Indivisible abiding in the divided, that  
knowledge know thou to be satvic.* 20

This knowledge is detailed in Shlokas 29 to 32 of Chapter VI. The essence of this knowledge lies in the person going behind the seeming diversity of objects and seeing them rooted in one as parts of a single whole and mould his behaviour towards them accordingly. This gives him an evenness of outlook towards all.

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान्पृथग्निधान् ।

वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ २१ ॥

*Knowledge which endless entities of manifold  
varieties as separate  
Sees in all beings, ye know, to be rajasic.* 21

NOTE.—Plurality in substance, variety in quality.

When a man swims on the surface, taking the universe spread before him as it appears to ordinary sight and moves accordingly, he only recognises the objects sentient and non-sentient acting in diverse ways. He sees that each human being is after his own game oblivious of what happens to the rest and that non-sentient objects and forces operate in their own way, amenable to human manipulation only under given conditions. He has no consciousness of the existence of a single power behind all activity or that this total activity is an organic unity with a definite purpose. He finds himself acting to purpose and sees others also doing so, but is unable to see beings as part of a system, acting within its broad limits for purposes imposed upon them and not of their making. He may have his moments of reflection when on account of some keen disappointment, failure or serious calamity he draws in and looks for the how and why of this amazing complexity he finds without. But these are temporary phases. Having the basic truths in the foundation of his being he cannot root out all thought of them from himself altogether. \* But his information or knowledge about these is taken on trust and does not form the basis of his normal action. In normal life he ignores the Supreme, the purposiveness of the universe and his separate existence from the body. He simply lives for the body, for him the only thing which has real existence is the changing universe. Therein he seeks satisfaction and to it he is attached. Everything else to him is an interesting mystery whereof he leaves the solution to better brains who have time enough to devote.

यत्तु कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तमहेतुकम् ।

अतत्त्वार्थवदल्पं च . तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥२२॥

*Knowledge which is absorbed in one single  
modification of nature as the all, without*

*reason,  
Lacking in true insight and petty, is called*

*tamasic. 22*

Moved by body-affections, when a man only occupies himself with solution of the immediate difficulty, heedless of what may happen later and recognising the existence of that one object alone which is supposed to bring relief for the moment, is so absorbed in it that he forgets its relation to other objects and their effect upon it, then his knowledge is *tamasic*. The object assumes the unnatural status of becoming all in all for the moment and involves him in blind and heedless action.

### Threefold Action

नियतं संगरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।

अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥२३॥

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः ।

क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम् ॥२४॥

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।

मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तत्तामसमुच्यते ॥२५॥

*Performed as duty, without attachment; free  
of affection and aversion,*

*Action without desire for fruit is called satvic. 23*

*Action involving desire for fruit, in the  
I-act attitude  
Performed with great effort, is called rajasic. 24  
Heedless of consequences, loss, injury or  
capacity,  
Action performed under delusion is called  
tamasic. 25*

In *satvic* action there is pleasure in the very performance. There is no compulsion, it springs from within in a mood of poised cheerfulness. While in *rajasic* action, the basis of which is satiation of desire for sense-objects, there is always an effort in commencing action because the apprehension of consequences is always present to the mind. There is always expenditure of energy in overcoming the resistance of others which causes worry and anxiety. It is never spontaneous in response to a call from within, but the consequence of a desire proving stronger than a multitude of her sisters and appropriating the machine. But the others also are busy pressing their claim to recognition and so the activity is seldom without friction even from within, which also involves great effort. Ignorant and heedless activity caused by anything which happens to take hold of the mind, whether because of self interest or class gain, even though later consequences may be disastrous is *tamasic*. Its essence lies in man ignoring the fundamental fact, that this universe is operated by a Supreme Power for the good of all, that he must co-operate with others to get what he wants and that he is not just a sack of clay without hope but a unique entity with a high destiny.

### Threefold Actor

मुक्तसंगोऽनहंवादी . धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।  
 सिद्धयसिद्धयोर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥२६॥  
 रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।  
 हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥२७॥  
 अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तम्भः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।  
 विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥२८॥

*Free of attachment, without egoism, full of  
 courage and enthusiasm,  
 Actor unaffected in success or failure is called  
 satvic. 26*

*Ambitious, seeking fruit of action, greedy,  
 heartless, impure,  
 Actor subject to joy and sorrow, is called  
 rajasic. 27*

*Fickle, vulgar, obstinate, deceptive,  
 ill-will-bearing, insolent,  
 Actor despondent and procrastinating is called  
 tamasic. 28*

बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्चैव गुणतन्त्रिविधं शृणु ।  
 प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनंजय ॥२९॥

*The triple distinction of understanding and  
 fortitude by differences of qualities  
 thou listen,  
 Described fully and separately, O victor of  
 wealth. 29*



### Threefold Understanding

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।

बंधं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥३०॥

*Initiation and renunciation, duty non-duty,  
fear and courage,*

*Bondage and liberation which knows  
is satvic understanding, O Parth. 30*

That understanding is *satvic* by which one understands (1) that renunciation means non-attachment to fruit of action or abandonment of the idea of agency in action and treating the body as an instrument of the Supreme for maintaining world-harmony and not cessation of body activity; that initiation does not mean engaging the body in action as such—a function which it performs in spite of resolve to the contrary—but engaging it in fruit-regarding action and treating the self alone as actor to the exclusion of the other four factors; (2) that true *dharma* is to conduct one self so, that every action however insignificant may aim at *Loksaṅgrah*. There is herein no idea of slaving for the body or injuring another for personal gain. Because the within is illumined by self-knowledge, there is consciousness of the beneficent nature of the universe and its direction by a benevolent and merciful Supreme. Contrary conduct is treated as involving *adharma*; (3) that true fear is fear of acting in ignorance of the fundamental truths of the universe under the domination of temporary impulse or desire for personal gain in disregard of future consequences to self or fellow-beings, and not living in constant apprehension of body-needs or cherished

desires not coming to fruition according to one's wish. Courage for him consists in facing any hardships or trials including body-dissolution while acting in the path of God for world-harmony. Body affections do not have the least effect in deflecting him from the true path; (4) that bondage consists in attachment to the world of sense as it necessitates assumption of body-forms and liberation is detachment therefrom and fixation of mind in the Supreme Architect of this world of sense-objects.

यथा धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।

अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥३१॥

*By which dharma and adharma, duty,  
non-duty,  
Are not duly conceived that understanding is  
called rajasic. 31*

The universe is full of diverse objects, some of which are a source of joy and others of sorrow. Personal exertion alone obtains them for use and nought else. Desire for satiation of needs and appropriation of objects to our dominion and control from the world without are fundamental traits of human nature. True *dharma* therefore consists in striving to satisfy these desires by personal activity and co-operation of others to be secured any how—by temptation, coercion or deception. The intensity of desire leads men to treat others as if they were non-sentient objects existing solely to carry out their orders regardless of what happens to them. Not service of fellow-men in recognition of our obligations to them and the Supreme for co-operating

with us in satisfying our needs, but that of the body is duteous action. Every gain is attributed to personal activity and the contribution of others is ignored giving a wholly erroneous view of the importance of personal activity. An understanding arguing thuswise is called *tajasic*.

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसाऽऽवृता ।

सर्वान् विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३२ ॥

*Enveloped by darkness which conceives  
adharma as dharma,  
And sees everything in a perverted light, that  
understanding, O Parth, is tamasic. 32*

*Tamasic* is the opposite of *satvic*. In place of illumination because of consciousness of the nature of the three verities which enable the understanding to act for the good of all with foresight, there is reign of darkness within in which the self is treated as practically non-existent and body all in all. When coerced by its needs, for him the whole universe is narrowed down to that particular object which is supposed to satisfy the craving. Nothing else exists for the moment. There is readiness to harm or injure others who may be in the way. Ill will holds sway and good will is absent altogether; what appears as good will towards those who serve the immediate purpose is a temporary impulse disappearing as the purpose is served and ready to transform itself into hostility on the next occasion if there is any resistance or refusal to obey. The whole being is centred in the desire itself. Anyone who would put in fuel in the fire to keep it burning is welcome and others who

believe the expectation are objects of wrath irrespective of their past behaviour. Particular objects of desire usurp the mental horizon from time to time and the whole energy is mobilised to secure them in disregard of consequences to self or society. Ill-will towards those who do not fall in and good will and regard for those who help, however ignoble the object and however harmful its consequences to others are treated as virtues. All those who advise against the mistaken course or warn against dangerous design are treated as enemies. Either laziness bereft of all ambition or feverish activity under coercion, blind to own future and existence of fellowmen is the characteristic of a *tamasic* understanding.

### Threefold Fortitude

धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेंद्रियक्रियाः ।

योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्याधृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ ३३ ॥

*Unerring fortitude by which man holds fast  
the activity of mind, vital force and*

*senses*

*By means of Yoga, O Parth, is called satvic.* 33

Absolute and enduring domination of the body-machine by the self so that nothing whatever can divert it from its course of beneficial activity in the interests of all by Yoga practice, i.e., cultivating a reason which always abides in the self and takes its orders therefrom and is not influenced by the everchanging body-affections or attachment to sense-objects is *satvic* fortitude.

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान् धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन ।

प्रसंगेन फलाकांक्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३४ ॥

*Fortitude by which he holds fast to religious observances, pleasures and wealth,*

*O Arjun,*  
*Desiring according to context, O Parth,*

*is rajasic. 34*

Fortitude which keeps man engaged in observing ritual prescribed in the Scriptures for attainment of worldly ends, riches and joys of life and also active otherwise in selfish pursuits is *rajasic*.

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च ।

न विमुंचति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३५ ॥

*By which sleep, fear, grief, despondency and*  
*vanity,*

*The stupid man does not give up, that*

*fortitude is called tamasic. 35*

The body-slave who on account of unwholesome diet, want of ambition or lack of sense does not want to move his body-organs fearing pain or inconvenience to his idol—body, who knowing himself to be the body and body alone treats all its affections as intimately his own and changes into moods of despondency and grief because of failure in some direction, or fear because of apprehension of some loss present or future, owing either to his own incapacity or resistance of others, and who at once adopts an attitude of vain hauteur in case of gain or success however insignificant, possesses a blind and heedless obstinacy,

### Threefold Happiness

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।

अभ्यासाद्गमते यत्र दुःखांतं च निगच्छति ॥३६॥

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।

तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥३७॥

*Now of threefold happiness you also hear,*

*O best of Bharats.*

*In which man revels by habit and reaches the  
end of pain.* 36

*That which is poison at first but nectar in  
the end*

*Is called satvic happiness the product of  
self-illuminated serenity.* 37

*Satvic* happiness consists in being in tune with the Infinite. Body-machine which has been accustomed to look for happiness in sense-objects and has formed habits of reaction to them because of attachment has got to be adjusted to a wholly new set of conditions. This involves a tremendous upheaval in the form of sense-control and dispassion towards highly alluring objects of sense. But when once adjusted and brought under control of reason illumined by self-knowledge there is un-mixed happiness, because the cause of change—sense-objects—no longer rules it so as to dislodge it from its new position.

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम्

परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥३८॥

*What by the union of senses to their objects is  
like nectar at first.*

*But poison in the end is called rajasic happiness. 38*

Revelling in sense delights gives sensual pleasure during the course of enjoyment. Similarly ambition while in course of being fulfilled keeps man pitched in a high key making him disregard incidental inconvenience or trouble. But after the sensuous joy is over or ambition fulfilled, there comes the period of reaping the aftermath. In the one, physical ailment causing disturbance in all activity and in the other, recollection of suffering caused to the exploited which arouses their bitter hostility, jealousy of equals or worry involved in retaining the spoils, disappointment because of inability to enjoy them for domestic or personal reasons, fear of parting therefrom one day and other sundry reasons cause disillusionment, and riches and name become a fruitful source of endless trouble. Outside trappings are there giving others the impression that the man is the favoured child of fortune, but his mind is restless; there is lack of peace within and so the whole pleasure is poisoned by worry and anxiety.

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।

निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥३९॥

*Happiness which at start and in sequel deludes  
the self,*

*And is the product of sleep, indolence and  
heedlessness is called tamasic. 39*

Self-preservation, propagation and satiation of animal needs, whatever joy these bring in is the share of the

majority. They indulge in them not spontaneously but by overcoming the natural inertia of the body and when perforce they do move there is no looking to right, left, front or back. There is blind short-sighted attention to the single detail which is supposed to bring relief. Painful at the start, progress of activity is under compulsion and devoid of pleasure. The end too is without reward because the needs of this strange structure of muscle and bone are a perennial source of worry, forcing the body to move, just the one thing it would avoid if possible.

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।

सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥ ४० ॥

*Neither on earth nor in heaven amongst the  
Devas or others,  
Is there an entity free from the effect of  
the three qualities born of Nature. 40*

### The Four Orders

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप ।

कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः ॥ ४१ ॥

*Of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and  
Shudras, O Harasser of foes,  
The functions are divided according to  
qualities born of their nature. 41*

### Brahmins

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षांतिरार्जवमेव च ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ ४२ ॥



*Mind-control, sense-control, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, Knowledge theoretical and practical and theism are attributes indicative of a Brahmin disposition.* 42

### **Kshatriyas**

शौर्यं तेजो रूतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।  
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ ४३ ॥

*Bravery, energy, grit, adroitness, not deserting the battle-field, Charity and lordly disposition are attributes indicative of a Kshatriya disposition.* 43

### **Vaishya and Shudra**

वृषिगोरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।  
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥ ४४ ॥

*Agriculture, cattle-rearing and business are attributes indicative of a Vaishya disposition. Actions designed to serve others are attributes indicative of a Shudra disposition.* 44

### **Perfection**

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।  
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विंदति तच्छृणु ॥ ४५ ॥

*Each one in discharging his own duties attains  
perfection\*,  
How he busy with his own duties attains  
perfection, to that listen thou. 45*

Perfection is attained by acting according to innate tendency and physical and mental training. It is not outward activity which matters but the motive which actuates it. If there is no desire for self and action is dedicated to the Supreme, then it leads to liberation. Attachment to fruit of action is the cause of

\*This doctrine categorically establishes that to attain perfection one has not to evolve from a Shudra into a Vaishya, Kshatriya and Brahmin frame by birth. That a Kshatriya Prince to attain perfection has not to enter a Brahmin womb and then take to making a living by serving as waterman at a railway station or a cook in a boarding house or may be, a peon or a clerk in some department of his old kingdom nor that a millionaire Vaishya should incarnate as an illiterate Panda at a place of pilgrimage or a priest eking out a precarious living out of the miseries of the sorrow-stricken by pressing the evil stars (*grahas*) into his service. Looked at in the light of the principle laid down here, the present structure of caste based on a false superiority by birth presents itself as an ugly metamorphosis of the natural divisions mentioned afore which are essential for preservation of the world, based as they are on merit and which work themselves out in every society of human beings by operation of natural causes. The myriad examples of the haughty twice-born, despite their pretensions to superiority on the score of birth, being compelled to choose means of livelihood which they proclaim low and degrading because generally adopted by their social victims—the Shudras or the so called lower orders—testify to the truth of this doctrine and clearly establish that the attributes stated above\* are the characteristic marks of the respective orders and not the accident of a womb wherein may be observed finding an asylum the noblest along with the most wicked, under the same caste label. If the great Shankara adorned a Brahmin womb, the great dacoit Sonelal, could also boast of the same

bondage. It is not that certain activities though impelled by an altruistic motive must necessarily lead to bondage and others though impelled by a self-regarding or corrupt motive lead to liberation.

### *How Attained*

यतः प्रवृत्तिभूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।

स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विंदति मानवः ॥ ४६ ॥

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वभावनियतं कर्ष कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ ४७ ॥

origin. If the Hindus feel pride in the Kshatriya birth of Rana Partap, so do they feel humiliated in the similar origin of those who bought body-safety or office at the cost of religion in those very days. If the Vaishyas can proudly point to Mahatma Gandhi as the product of a Vaishya womb, so they have to admit in silence the like origin of the village money lender—an adept in manipulating accounts. If the twice-born points with scorn at the womb wherein the untouchable receives nurture, he perforce has to hold his breath when reminded of the like origin of the great *Valmik*, the biographer of his beloved Rama. Say what the Brahmin may, the world will worship Gandhi of a Vaishya womb and look to him for guidance because of his virtues and merit ignoring the pretentious priest and the astrologer. Say what the detractor of caste may, the world will honour Tagore of a Brahmin womb as an ornament of the Brahmin order and look to him for instruction and guidance ignoring the war cries of the apostles of social attrition. Worship of merit and virtue is inherent in man, wherever found. Caste too lays claim to superiority under cover of merit and virtue, only it has succeeded in amalgamating them with birth under the dazzle of mighty names and glorious tradition by prolonged manipulation of mass mind. But as the amalgamation is unnatural and lacking in solid foundation, the whole body-politic has become diseased.

सहजं कर्म कौंतेय सदोपमपि न त्यजेत् ।

स्वर्गरंभा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ॥ ४८ ॥

असत्तत्त्वुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।

नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां संन्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥ ४९ ॥

*From whom all objects have evolved and by  
whom is all this pervaded,  
Worshipping Him by his own actions, man  
attains perfection. 46*

*Better one's own duty devoid of merit than  
the duty of another well-performed,  
Performing action consonant with  
one's aptitude man does not incur sin. 47*

*Action natural to one's aptitude though  
faulty should not be forsaken,  
All egoistic commencements are enveloped by  
demerit like fire by smoke. 48*

*With unattached outlook all around,  
self conquered, without yearning,  
Man attains the highest perfection of  
non-action-ness by renunciation. 49*

All sentient and non-sentient objects are a manifestation of the Supreme. He pervades them all. Each object has a definite purpose and a definite function to perform in the cycle. Proper performance of his definite functions is acting according to the will of the Supreme. It is rendering Him real service which is true devotion to Him. Therefore one who acts according to his capacity and training imbued with the sole desire

of worshipping Him and with no other motive, attains perfection through such dedicated activity. Judging from its false temporal standards the world at large may call such activity low or ignoble and owing to this erroneous view it may look unworthy in the eyes of the doer himself but such an attitude is wrong, as such activity inasmuch as it is the outcome of one's mental and moral make up and physical training will be performed better than any other which though better in popular estimation is not one for which he is fitted by temperament and training. The product of such activity can never be good, because there has been no adequate previous preparation in the shape of mind and body training. To attempt to do what one is not fitted for, for fear of adverse comment is sinful, it amounts to deception. While performing such duty as suits one's training and temperament can never be sinful, say what an ignorant and thoughtless world may. Is not the man putting his body to the best use at the moment, and that is all that is demanded of him by his Maker according to the above teaching. Such action should never be forsaken even though it appears lacking in merit because of wrong social standards. All actions in which there is desire for fruit and are not commenced with a detached mind, whatever their nature and by whomsoever performed—prince or peasant, brahmin or pariah—are tainted. They are contrary to the principle of dedicated service on which this world-order is based and connote ignorance of the self and his place in the universe-cycle. *Only that action leads to the highest perfection of non-actionness which is dedicated to the Supreme and proceeds from a self who treats the body as*

*an instrument of will divine and has given up all idea of agency therein.*

### How to Attain Brahman

सिद्धिं प्राप्नोति यथा ब्रह्म तथाऽऽप्नोति निबोध मे ।  
 समासेनैव कौंतेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥ ५० ॥  
 बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च ।  
 शब्दादीन्विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ॥ ५१ ॥  
 विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः ।  
 ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ॥ ५२ ॥  
 अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।  
 विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ ५३ ॥  
 ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।  
 समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥ ५४ ॥  
 भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।  
 ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥ ५५ ॥  
 सर्वकर्माणि यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्ब्रह्मचरपाश्रयः ।  
 मत्प्रसादाद्वाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥ ५६ ॥

*Perfection attained how he attains Brahman  
 that now learn from Me,  
 Briefly, O Kunti-born, who is the final end of  
 Knowledge.  
 Endued with purified reason, senses and mind  
 controlled firmly,  
 Objects like sound abandoned, getting rid of  
 affection and aversion,*

*Quiet-place dweller, spare-eater, speech, body  
 and mind disciplined,  
 Ever given to Yoga of meditation, fully  
 established in renunciation, 52  
 Eggism, power, arrogance, passion, anger and  
 sense of property,  
 Given up, serene, without myness-feeling, he is  
 worthy to be Brahman-like. 53  
 Brahman-like happy self neither grieves nor  
 desires,  
 Same to all beings he rejoices in supreme  
 devotion to Me. 54  
 By devotion he knows Me, who and what I am  
 in truth,  
 Then knowing My essence he enters into Me. 55  
 Always performing all actions depending  
 on Me,  
 By My grace he attains the eternal and  
 everlasting state\*. 56*

### Advice to Arjun

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।

बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मुञ्चितः सततं भव ॥ ५७ ॥

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ।

अथ चेत्त्वमहंकारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनन्द्यसि ॥ ५८ ॥

\*Non-pollution by the touch of a pariah is not one of the attributes of a brahman-like person according to Krishna. There is no mention of caste or sex either. Nay, he who observes the aforesaid distinctions would lose all claim to the grace of the Lord or fitness for the everlasting state, as he is enjoined to be same to all beings.

*Mentally renouncing all actions to Me,*  
*devoted to Me,*  
*Refused in Buddhi-Yoga always think of Me.* 57  
*Heart set on Me, by My grace thou wilt*  
*overcome all obstacles*  
*And if out of egoism thou wilt not listen,*  
*thou wilt perish.* 58

He whose heart is fixed in God cannot be tempted by any considerations of worldly gain or loss. Them he treats as affecting the body only which he has dedicated to Him. All he is concerned with is to avoid such activity as may conflict with the smooth progress of the world-order. He has no care for the result whatever it be. No sense-objects can operate as obstacles in his path, as he does not act for contemplated fruit but dedicates action to Him. Even obstacles become the friend of such a one. He treats them too as a manifestation of the Divine playing their role in the cycle and serving as a wholesome check upon his activity. Therefore in this shloka Arjun is given an assurance that whatever appears as an obstacle across his path to victory, he will overcome by his unwavering faith in His Maker. And then he is given a strong warning that if he thought success and failure of an undertaking to be the result of one's own activity only and relying on his erroneous judgment about his incapacity to overcome Kuru resistance in his blind egoism, he did not fight then he was bound to perish. The consequences of avoiding war were so serious for him and his family both as regards finance and reputation that it would practically mean his end.





ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां शङ्खुन तिष्ठति ।  
 भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यंत्रारूढानि मायया ॥ ६१ ॥  
 तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।  
 तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्यान् प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥ ६२ ॥

*The Lord abides in the heart-regions of all  
 beings  
 Revolving them all seated on the wheel by  
 His power. 61*  
*O Arjun, seek shelter in Him with all  
 thy being  
 By His grace thou wilt attain supreme  
 peace and the everlasting Abode\*. 62*

What man through ignorance calls his activity is not really his. The Supreme abides in the hearts of all beings. It is He who has given a gift of this wonderful machine—the body—to us. It is by His Power that all bodies move and not by the power of their self. The self simply finds himself seated within the nine-gated body with defined functions and these functions are unalterable by any act of volition on his part. He is the real Actor within. Therefore recognising this fundamental principle, Arjun is directed to devote his mind solely to Him and treat Him as his refuge and shelter. The Origin and Cause of all being won over, the universe would then be conquered, it will not produce distraction or disturbance. Supreme peace would reign. Let God within him operate the body machine and

\*Krishna here quite clearly and definitely talks of the Supreme in the third person, as a category apart from himself.

there will be no trouble about slaying and being slain, as then would the functions of the body be performed in pursuance of His plan for world-harmony. He should give up the mentality of an actor and assume that of an illumined self resting in the Supreme and watching the play as a spectator. This is the supreme secret of secrets.

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।

विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥६३॥

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः ।

इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥६४॥

*This most occult knowledge has been*

*imparted thee by Me*

*Reflecting thereon fully, ye do as ye please. 63*

*Again the most secret of all, My supreme*

*word thou hearken.*

*Thou art My firm friend, so I shall state*

*what will benefit thee. 64*

Arjun is asked to ponder carefully and then make his choice. But the stakes involved are so large and future consequences so momentous, that Krishna in his anxiety to make Arjun choose the course so near his heart does not want to take risk, but makes a final effort to determine his choice and prevent him from going astray.

### • Summing up

Arjun had put his whole case before Krishna in Shlokas 7 and 8 of Chapter II (p. 37) and prayed for light and guidance. In the following two Shlokas Krishna gives his final conclusions thereon.

Arjun had said: By the taint of helplessness is overcome my (warrior) nature . . . . . whatever be proper that Ye tell me definite, & . . . . . (7).

Krishna's answer is:

### *Surrender Thyself*

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥६५॥

*Be of My mind, My devotee, My worshipper  
and do homage to Me.*

*Thou wilt attain Me, I give thee solemn  
promise, thou art My dear. 65*

Know the self to be eternal. As regards the body machine with its triplet of cognition, feeling and will—mind the cognitive part should be withdrawn from its wanderings in the world of sense and fixed in the changeless Supreme, wherein rested it would not be disturbed by cogitations of profit, loss, honour, dishonour, victory, defeat and the sin involved in killing preceptors and kinsmen; feeling, the emotional part, which has been devoting itself to son, wife, family, kith, friends and preceptors, should change the object of its devotion, it is to devote itself to the Supreme, He should be its Adored now; will, the active part which so far has been devoted to blind service of self, relations or friends by engaging in self-regarding pursuits, should now be devoted to service of the Supreme as the Creator of the body and sense-objects, by engaging in non-fruit-regarding activity for world-harmony. The credit of the amazing relation of the body with sense-objects is in the Creator and not in them. He is responsible for

this wondrous play which keeps the self so fascinated in it. The way to really enjoy the play is to enter into the spirit of the Author. Body activity should therefore be regulated according to His plan and purpose, as He is manifested in all objects including Arjun's own body. Human activity always affects other beings for good or ill, which is another way of saying that it operates for or against world-harmony. So to act for the good of all in accordance with His desire is to truly worship Him—abide as He does in all beings—and render Him true obeisance. If the whole personality composed of the three constituents—cognition, feeling and will—is dedicated to Him, then Arjun's *kārpanya doṣh* (taint of helplessness) would be destroyed and his warrior nature would resume its old supremacy.

Arjun had said . . . . . I pray Thee with mind  
confused as to duty . . . . . (7).

For I see not it would remove my grief  
Which withers the senses  
If I attain of earth without foes and flourishing  
The kingdom, aye of the shining ones the lordship.  
(8)

Krishna's answer is:

*Do Thy Duty To Me, Grieve Not*

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं . व्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥६६॥

*Casting aside all temporal duties seek  
shelter in Me.*

*I will liberate thee from all sins, grieve not.* 66

**Dharman\***—Duty here is used in the same sense in which it was used by Arjun in Shloka 7 quoted above. It looks that it had a very comprehensive import in his mind. The trouble about duty owed to kinsmen and preceptors was undoubtedly there but there was in addition much more. There was the question of duty (1) to the family and princesses married into the family for

\*According

1. Shankar.

It means "both righteous and unrighteous deeds". The passage means "renouncing all works."—(*Gita* p. 499: Mahadeva Sastri's Tr.).

2. Ramanuj.

It means "desire for fruit in action and attachment thereto and actor-mentality in action. The passage, therefore, means that the three Yogas of Devotion, Knowledge and Action should be performed without attachment to action or its fruit. Action is to be dedicated to the Supreme by renouncing the idea of agency therein." (*Bh. Gita*; Shankarbhasya Sapt Tika by Vitthal Sharma, p. 809).

3. Madhava.

It means "fruit of action." The passage means "renunciation of fruit in action." (*Ibid*).

4. Tilak.

It means "various duties like those of non-violence, truth, service of parents and preceptors, sacrifice, charity, renunciation, etc., etc. The passage means that Arjun is to avoid the tangle of these duties and refuge himself in the Supreme. In other words, whatever actions one has to perform according to his disposition and innate tendency, he may do, refuted in the Supreme." (*Gita Rahasya*, p. 848, Hindi Edition).

5. Raja Ram.

It means that "it was proper to live by begged food than lift arms against uncles et cetera who were entitled to Arjun's reverence. The passage means that Krishna exhorted Arjun to forsake the grief of killing kin which was troubling him and seek refuge in God." (*Gita*, p. 435).

whom adequate provision was necessary, (2) to vindicate family honour, (3) to punish wickedness and establish the reign of righteousness and justice, (4) to wrest their kingdom from the Kuru cheats, (5) to fulfil the rigid vows taken at the time of departure to the woods and to avenge the wrong done to Draupdi and themselves. There was a whole mental complex ramifying into all possible relations of his with the world without him, as everyone was affected by his decision to a more or less extent. The entire moral code and social usage was in the melting pot.

As regards the question of what you should do in the present situation, Arjun, you should not worry about it but leaving aside all temporal considerations which are troubling you, you should do your duty to the Supreme, which is to seek refuge in Him. The correct attitude to adopt towards worldly relations I have indicated in Chapter VI, Shloka 9, page 263, *supra*, as follows: "Who adopts same attitude towards well-wishers, friends, foes, neutrals and arbiters, the jealous and relatives, even towards the good and the sinning, he is better still." You are enjoined to maintain an even cutlook in all worldly relations and in this attitude "whatever thou doeth, eateth, offereth or giveth and whatever body suffering thou endureth that dedicate to Me" (Ch. IX, Sh. 27, p. 339). All worldly ties have been designed by the Creator to keep human society together so that the movements of the cycle may not be impeded and the whole may work in the interests of all. The proper limit and extent of the ties of kindred, family, friends, preceptors, guardians, protectors and rulers, and the binding nature of the moral rules for-

mulated to regulate them, are determined by the Supreme with reference to their utility for world-harmony. Therefore by seeking refuge in Him and acting for His sake every one of these ties along with its moral rules is reduced to its proper proportions and just such weight is given to it as is proper in the interest of universal-harmony and no more. The ties and moral maxims and social rules which regulate them become useful devices for securing mutual welfare in life and anyone or more of them are given the go-by when it or they fails or fail to serve this ordained purpose. So the best solution of the conflict which arises on a clash between two or more of them in relation to a given set of circumstances is to act with god-consciousness without thought of self. In this attitude whatever course suggests itself, even though to ordinary eyes it appears objectionable, can never involve man in sin or bondage to action. Such a course of conduct, O Arjun, would save you from the intense grief which is withering your senses.

*N.B.*—This fundamental teaching of refuge in the Supreme and using the body as His instrument is pressed home by advice, persuasion and a solemn promise in Shloka 65, followed by a command, assurance and consolation against grief in Shloka 66.

इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन ।

न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति ॥ ६७ ॥

*This neither to the non-austere nor*

*non-devotee,*

*Nor the non-serving is fit to relate nor to*

*him who cavils at Me. 67*



One who has no control over his appetites, is sceptical about God and is devoid of devotion to Him or a sense of service to fellow-men, is not fit to be taught this doctrine of self surrender or refuge in the Supreme.

### Ideal Existence

य इदं परमं गुह्यं मद्भक्तैश्चमिधास्यति ।

भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः ॥६८॥

*He who will teach this most occult*

*Doctrine to My devotees*

*With supreme devotion in Me,*

*will come to Me. 68*

Herein is indicated the road to liberation and merger in the Supreme. It is no other than instructing the deserving in the doctrine of *Refuge in the Supreme* as taught by Krishna in the Gita.

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।

भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥६९॥

*And amongst men none renders dearer*

*service to Me,*

*And on earth there is none other so*

*dear to Me\*. 69*

---

\*One may wonder if the Hindu readers of the Gita have duly realised the tremendous import of the above Shlokas. Dare they deny that in failing to carry this message to fellow-men they have neglected the highest and most important duty of their life. Far from discharging this duty their whole outlook has been one of totally ignoring the existence of god-fearing followers of other

Herein is laid down in emphatic terms the ideal use a man can put his body to, while living in this world. *It is propagation and teaching of the doctrine to the deserving without distinction of race, caste, creed or sex.* The only conditions laid down are mentioned in Shloka 67, *supra*, namely, *control over appetites, devotion to God, spirit of service to fellow-men and absence of scepticism.* These are neither *the heritage* nor *the monopoly* of *particular individuals or classes.* This is ideal existence according to Krishna. (See page 204, *supra*).

faiths deserving of spiritual light and guidance and coolly neglecting those within the fold. The noblest of teachings have been read and understood in the light of a mass of customs and traditions with which society has been incrustated by vested interests blind to reality. Thoughtless credulity manipulated by the calculating priest, the opulent *mahant* and the ease-loving *sadhu* puts its own hue upon the sublimest of teachings and injunctions to the point of actual disregard. No wonder the Supreme has visited the unworthy custodians with well-merited punishment in the shape of political and economic slavery and social, and moral degradation.

The Supreme has pointed out wherein the duty of His devotee lies, but has left him full freedom of action. The devotee has chosen the path of sense-slavery and selfish pursuits in matters economic and political, and contempt and neglect of fellow-men in matters social and spiritual. The Supreme too in His mercy has awarded the merited fruit, "in action hast thou freedom," true, "but not in fruit ever" (Ch. II, Sh. 47). The fruit is in His hands. The devotee is reaping the fruit of his aforesaid actions in all spheres of life. He, the self appointed favourite of the Creator, is being compelled by the castaway to be afraid of him. He is being forced to bow to the despised and the neglected and patiently and quietly bear charges of self-blind hauteur, stony-heartedness and greed levelled against him. . .

### Who Studies It.

अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।

ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ॥ ७० ॥

*And who studies this sacred dialogue of ours,  
By him I shall be worshipped by the sacrifice  
of knowledge, such is My view. 70*

### Who Hears It

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः

सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभोल्लोकान् प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥ ७१ ॥

*The man who would listen full of faith and  
without cavilling,  
Will after death attain to the blessed regions  
of the righteous. 71*

Listening to the teaching in faith will have a purifying effect on morals and make a man more and more *satvic* entitling him to a higher life of wholesome enjoyment and comparative peace.

### The Question

कश्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं तं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्र्येण चेतसा ।

कश्चिदज्ञानसंमोहः प्रणष्टस्ते धनंजय ॥ ७२ ॥

*Has it been heard by thee, O Parth, with an  
attentive mind,  
Has the delusion of ignorance been destroyed,  
O wealth-victor? 72*

## The Answer .

अर्जुन उवाच

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा तत्प्रसादान्मयाऽच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥७३॥

**Arjun said—**

*Destroyed is my delusion, and memory  
regained by me by Thy grace,*

*O Unwavering.*

*Firm am I, with doubts removed, I shall*

*do Thy bidding. 73*

**Delusion**—The reference here is to the delusion described in Shlokas 33-46 of Chapter I, (pp. 23-31), and Shlokas 4-5 of Chapter II (p. 34).

Arjun thought that killing the sons of Dhritrashtra even though they were desperadoes was sinful, as it involved destruction of the family and its glorious traditions. His mind was obsessed with the idea that to march to victory over the dead bodies of Drona and Bhishma—both entitled to his reverence—would be tantamount to partaking of feasts stained with their blood—an idea wholly repugnant to his refined moral feelings.

This was destroyed because Arjun realised that soul was eternal and did not die with the body, and that worldly relations of kin, preceptors and others were devices of the Supreme for maintenance of the world order and therefore not fit subjects of worry or grief when their observance led to destruction of harmony—the *raison d'être* of their existence—and brought one

in conflict with his duty to the Supreme, their Promulgator.

**Memory regained**—I now know that I am an eternal spark from the Divine with a unique destiny, come seated in the body-chariot for a temporary sojourn on this mortal plane. I remember now that I have defeated these warriors facing me before and that they themselves have already broken the family traditions and are acting in violation of the very relations which I in my ignorance thought would be preserved if I refused to fight.

**Doubts removed**—The reference here is to the doubt as to victory expressed in Chapter II, Shloka 6 (p. 36). Arjun was distressed at the idea of engaging in wholesale slaughter of his kin when there was no knowing as to the result. He considered it so heinous that life itself was hardly worth living after it in his eyes. Now he realised that victory and defeat was a matter in the hands of God. His sole concern was to engage in battle as a matter of duty owed to the Supreme for preservation of world-harmony (*Loksangrah*). He knew best what was right and proper in the interests of all and would award the fruit accordingly.

**I am firm**—I have unswerving faith in the supreme advice that fight under the circumstances is a most meritorious act, called for in the highest interests of the social order.

संजय उवाच

इत्थं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।

संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भुतं रोमहर्षणम् ॥ ७४ ॥

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानेतद्गुह्यमहं परम् ।  
 योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्सान्नात्कथयतः स्वयम् ॥७५॥  
 राजन्संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य संवादमिममद्भुतम् ।  
 केशवार्जुनयोः पुराणं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥७६॥  
 तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः ।  
 विस्मयो मे महान् राजन् हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः ॥७७॥

Sanjaya said— .

*In this way, of Vasudeva and the high-souled  
 Parth,  
 This dialogue wonderful which makes my  
 hair stand on end did I hear. \*74  
 Through the kindness of Vyas have I heard  
 this supreme and most secret  
 Yoga direct from Krishna, the Lord of Yoga  
 Himself relating it\*. 75  
 O king, as I recollect again and again this  
 wonderful and holy dialogue,  
 Of Keshav and Arjun I rejoice again and again. 76*

\*Before the battle began Vyas had enquired from Dhritrashtra if he desired to see the battle himself. But he refused and expressed a desire to hear an accurate account of all that happened there. So Vyas by his Yoga-power endowed Sanjaya with divine vision by which he was able to see all that was passing at Kurukshetra at all hours of the day and night. He actually heard the whole of the Gita dialogue and repeated it to Dhritrashtra (Bhishma Parva, Adhyaya 2, Shs. 7-9).

*And as I recall that most wonderful form  
of Hari,  
I feel wonder-struck, O king, and rejoice  
again and again.* 77

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्यो धनुर्धरः ।

तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवानीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥७८॥

*Wherever there is Krishna, Lord of Yoga and  
Parth the bowman,  
There is plenty, victory, happiness and sound  
policy, is my opinion.* 78

What Sanjaya means by presence of Lord of Yoga and Parth the bowman is not presence of so many copies of the Gita in houses of men or existence of a large number of persons reading it in private or reciting it in public, without grasping the true import of Krishna's supreme advice to Arjun; but predominance of the spirit of fearless resistance to cupidity and tyranny backed by vanity and consciousness of superior strength, which animated Krishna as guide and teacher and inspired Arjun to action, undeluded by blind attachment to relations and unaffected by thought of temporal loss, like destruction of family or possessions, for preservation of righteousness. Affluence, victory, happiness and sound state policy attend a community which is dominated by such spirit.

### Devotee's Fall'

There is no book so popular, or read widely in private and recited in public with such devotion, by the Hindus as the Gita. But the promised consequences have not followed. In place of plenty,

victory and happiness there has been and is penury, slavery and suffering. There is no people under the sun bound to the Hindu by ties of blood, religion or social intercourse. There is no country on earth including Hindustan, which he may call exclusively his own now. He lives in a tenement guarded by his converted cousin in the east and west and managed for him by a highly gifted and resourceful trustee, who has developed a special fondness for his trust and is keenly alive to the necessity of skilfully managing the guards, to stick to his job.

In place of sound policy there is utterly blind and self-ruinous policy, which has developed caste consciousness and mutual apathy. It has diminished the power of the term 'hindu' to fill the mind of a Hindu with just racial pride or consciousness of a common social and religious bond for mutual good of all brothers high or low, or touch the tender chords of his heart to urge him to activity in support of his brother in faith. It has kept the devotee aloof from seven and a half crores of his kith and kin whose forbears swore by Krishna, and who are now being carefully inoculated with the virus of descent from a foreign stock and transformed into former rulers of the Hindus, under his very nose without moving him to reflect upon the implications of this startling game.

### **The Explanation**

is furnished by the devotee's treatment of the teaching. He has either acquired an outlook of misguided renunciation, involving a repudiation of responsibility to give a lead to the people against religious and political manœuvring and led a life of self-satisfied contentment inattentive to the ills of the body politic and unmoved by its social, economic and political degradation, or remaining in the world, has desired to have peace, plenty and honour here and liberation hereafter as the fruits of formal daily recitations, without altering his mental outlook and mode of life.

### **Devotee's Psychology**

1. He learns that the self is a changeless and eternal spark from God (Ch. XV, Sh. 7) separate from the body—a machine which is changing constantly both physically and in mental outlook;



that the best way to serve oneself is to serve the whole world, in other words to strive for preservation of truth and righteousness which are the bases of the world order. Then the world co-operates with the man in securing to him the wherewithal to meet his necessities. And a slight reflection would show that no human want can ever be satisfied nor any human project pushed forward without its co-operation (Ch. III, Sh. 10-6). But instead of becoming an unbending and unwearied crusader in the cause, he lives in constant fear of body dissolution because of blind attachment to it. Indeed he attaches so much sanctity to it, that despite Krishna's teaching that the lowest of the low-born becomes a virtuous self (*dharamatma*) by becoming His devotee and attains enduring peace—which means that his body becomes pure both physically and in mental outlook—he blindly sticks to his notion that his body is polluted by touch with his body, but remains pure after touching a body used for committing murder, forging documents, counterfeiting coins, suborning fellow-men, robbing travellers, kidnapping a neighbour's daughter, or selling his own to an opulent old man, or betraying a comrade or his country and community for a job, or other petty gain, provided the caste calls its occupant twice-born. He lives to serve the body and not the Supreme through service of His creation.

2. He learns the elevating doctrine that one should look upon the sufferings of all as he does upon his own (Ch. V., Sh. 29-32) and do his utmost to alleviate them. In actual practice he quite arbitrarily excludes the widow and the untouchable from its benefit, out of fear of his caste. His own suffering in dotage or that of his son disturbs his peace of mind, but the torments of his widowed daughter—a victim of social convention—leave him cold. He is indifferent and contemptuous to the untouchable, so long as he is friendly and remains within the fold, but becomes resignedly cautious after he has been claimed by another faith. Then he calmly puts up with his excesses in his zeal for the new faith and contempt for his blind orthodoxy. Nay, he benevolently opens his purse strings to feed and clothe the new bigot, in flood and famine in proof of his religious toleration, to his great amusement.

3. He knows that Krishna addressed his teaching to man (Ch. III, Sh. 31) and that according to him, the ideal use of the

body for a devotee, is to convey the teaching to the deserving (Ch. XVIII, Sh. 68-9). In actual practice he has narrowed it to distribution of cheap copies of the Gita and its public recitations before Hindu audiences. Man to him has become a synonym for one born and brought up as a Hindu, and a devotee one for an admirer of Bhagwat Krishna, and not one (whether Hindu or not) devoted to the Supreme, whose mouthpiece the great Teacher was. A non-Hindu may treat his soul as best he may. There is no hope of assistance from the Hindu devotee, whose sole concern is to ignore him who abjures the faith, and drive away him, who knocks at his door. There is no entrance. There are only exits all around, left unguarded for the activity of such good men as open their arms of hospitable welcome to those, despised and neglected by the custodian of the doctrine. • Amazing as it may seem, his blind and thoughtless attitude has rendered this sublime teaching, which the great Teacher addressed to all men, practically untouchable, and created problems of baffling difficulty for Hindu society. It looks as if the Hindu devotee recognises no duty to the non-Hindu brother. He has no mission to fulfil, no message to convey to suffering humanity. He comes down on this plane just to live and secure his liberation through the priest or by associating with the fauna of the forest. Now, the uniqueness of his faith lies in its refusal to welcome the non-Hindu brother into its fold. All non-Hindus are trespassers in this heaven of bliss. Yet the great Teacher categorically taught that all are sparks from one Supreme Source; that human distinctions are limited to the body only, which is everchanging. In fact the whole teaching aims at bringing about a transformation of body-activity—physical and mental—into a state of perfection, for which Krishna himself served as a model (Ch. III, Sh. 22-24). And if the body can change, then why this inflexible bar?

4. He learns that protection of the good and preservation of righteousness is the highest virtue. But that he practises by maintaining the religious heads in idle luxury and feeding professional beggars; by giving full support to priestly denunciations of timely innovations and reform of abuses, and rigid enforcement of all rules of caste and marriage against the renegades. He does not expect the religious leaders—spiritual guardians of the community—

to give him a lead against injustice and encroachment on his rights which may interfere with his mode of life according to the teaching. He yields a meek submission to organised force and treats his misfortunes as god-ordained, out of sheer helplessness. He may occasionally mourn his lot, but is quite indifferent to the apathy of the religious heads or Sannyasis and priests, in the struggle for freedom and reform of abuses of the body politic. Renunciation of the religious head for him has become a synonym for repudiation of responsibility to assist the public against aggression religious or political and not abandonment of worldly possessions, which are always in demand under some pretext or other. The guardians only live for periodical fleecing of the devotees and not for service, a circumstance which has always proved to be a source of fundamental weakness and acted like insidious poison in the Hindus' struggle for honourable existence as a great community.

In short the devotee has interpreted the supreme advice in the light of current usage and notions of morality which govern his waking life. While Arjun accepted it without reservation, subordinating all temporal duties enjoined for every day existence by usage and Smritis under given conditions which alter with circumstance and time, to the supreme need of preserving the reign of righteousness and Truth. He sought refuge in Him alone to the utter disregard of Sanjaya's advice to give up claim to kingdom, from considerations of destruction of kin and family tradition, because Krishna stamped his foot down upon this reasoning and argued for a fight against evil, undaunted by possible destruction of family and its tradition or other temporary loss. Arjun had the courage of conviction and moral strength to follow the supreme advice in practice and secured the indicated reward.

But now the seed sown by the pious recitations in a worried and anxious body is fed by notions prevalent in his class, under the care of the priest and the astrologer or social and professional colleagues. It grows in an environment of slavery, which the callous indifference of a self-seeking and unpatriotic clergy happy as a lark in its chains and vigorous activity of an astute and efficient bureaucracy, intensely devoted to its motherland and proud of its proficiency in the art of governing the native, have turned into a stupendous machine for killing self-confidence, initiative and adven-

ture, and filling the being with diffidence and fear. Unlike Arjun this seedling of the slave nursery has neither the courage of conviction nor moral strength to become the dauntless and unwearied foe of religious, social, economic and political exploitation by agencies indigenous or foreign, for preservation of world-harmony (*lok-sangrah*). He behaves like a mild and friendless milch cow, and this is duly appreciated by friend and foe in their dealings with him. A weak will, afraid of or bending before opposition real or unreal, in a greed-set mind, and a heart sinking at the thought of loss and suffering and running to its assistance by conjuring up lurid pictures of misery and trouble, to reconcile him to evil in a spirit of self-diffident resignation, have been the curse of the devotee. An iron determination to follow the thorny path of truth and righteousness, undeterred by obstacles and opposition however formidable with unflinching faith in God; and a heart tender but stable conscious of its purity but steeled against prospective loss and suffering, which like deadly cobras lie across the road and guard the entrance to happiness and plenty, will prove to be his salvation.

The devotee has to realise that the all-knowing all-powerful, just and merciful Supreme has, in a far greater measure than he, been an eye-witness of the extinction of races, downfall of empires, decay of religions, devastation of countries by epidemics, famine and flood, and decline of nations, classes and families; and that He is now a spectator of the daily trials and sufferings of humanity, along with him. No one has ever doubted His tender solicitude for man. Why? Because man is free to act. He sins and reaps what he sows. The Supreme does not ally Himself with evil because He is pure. The devotee as merchant, landlord, statesman, servant, soldier, ruler, house-holder, *Sadhu*, priest or citizen should give up the attempt to flirt with evil by showing that he has been gifted with an extra dose of compassion and sweet reasonableness.

A clever world seeing his behaviour towards the untouchable has long interpreted this attitude of his as the product of a selfish desire to reap the maximum of benefit without risking personal convenience and safety or disturbing the old social and religious equilibrium. It has made fellow-men indifferent or defiant, and driven him away and away from Krishna. It is up to him to belie this by

acting like Arjun and demonstrate the truth of Sanjaya's hope-inspiring words.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णा-  
र्जुनसंवादे संन्यासयोगो नामाष्टादशोऽध्यायः ॥१८॥

*End of Chapter eighteenth of the glorious Upanishads  
sung by the Lord, the Science of the Supreme, the  
Scripture of Yoga, the dialogue of Sri Krishna  
and Arjun, designated*

THE YOGA OF LIBERATION IN RENUNCIATION

ओ३म् शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

Aum. Peace. Peace. Peace.

# INDEX

## Action—

analysis of mental, 92.  
 Arjun's confusion between reason and 101.  
 complex 510.  
 defined 310.  
 determined by character 174.  
 fitness the test of good 176.  
 forbidden 217.  
 form of, no test 209.  
 fruit-regarding 73.  
 law of human 80.  
 motive the test of good 208.  
 nature of, without attachment 109.  
 nature of duteous 110.  
 non-fruit-regarding 75.  
 renunciation of duteous, 504.  
 selfish and selfless contrasted 81.  
 test of duteous 136.  
 threefold 513.  
 varieties of 217.

## Actor—

who is the, 169, 508.  
 complex, 508.  
 threefold 515.

Adhibhut 310.

Adhidaiva 310.

Adhiyajna 310.

Adhyatma 310, 369.

Adityas 355.

Advice to Arjun 63, 313, 398, 469, 530, 535, 536.

Ahár *see* food.

Ahimsa *see* non-violence.

Akarma *see* non-action.

Alternatives 62, 399.

Anugita 186-89.

## Arjun—

advice to (*see* advice).  
 alone saw the Universal form first 389.  
 asks what impels man to sin 178.  
 breakdown of, 17, its analysis 92.  
 confused between action and reason 101.  
 confused between renunciation and action 235.  
 craves forgiveness 386.  
 gift of divine vision to 371.  
 perturbed 13, why 14.  
 self-possessed again 392.  
 trembles 378.

## Arjun's—

- adoration 351, 385.
- alarm 280.
- argument of family destruction 27.
- argument of sin involved in killing preceptors 33.
- confession 36.
- delusion in kin 22, 42, 543.
- distress 37.
- doubt as to victory 18, 36.
- irresponse to fight 58.
- puzzle 381.
- question *re* marks of a man of stable reason 87.
- request to see Krishna's Yoga and glory 353.
- request to see old form 388.
- surprise 184.
- talk with Yudhishtir 19.
- vision 374.

Asat 501.

Ashvattha 357, 434.

Asuri sampad *see* demoniac.

Atatāi 24, 29.

Atma *see* self.

Attainment, modes of 205, 313, 999, 417.

conditions of 85.

of the Supreme 421.

sacrifices for. 221.

Aum 289, 365, 498.

Austerity 480.

- of body 485.
- of speech 486.
- of mind 487.
- threefold 488, 504.

Avatar 189.

Bhakti *see* devotion.

Birth, how determined 311.

Body, chariot 43, 227.

- its purpose and function 45.
- contact with sense-objects 46.
- how does it die 49.

Brahman *see* Supreme.

Brahma, day of 317.

night of 317.

Brihat-sama 361, 364.

Brahma-state 99, 100.

Brahman-Vadin 497.

Brahmin, defined 524.

Buddhi-Yoga 65, 81, 105, 106.

its unique features 72.

Buddha 143.

Castes (Orders) the four 209, 523.

Charity 449, 503.

threefold 489.

Christ, doctrine of service and suffering and its perversion 141.

Creation *see* Praja.

Creator, speech of the 112.

Daivi-sampad *see* godly 445, 454.Dan *see* charity.

Deluded, the 169, 329.

Delusion, of opposites, 305, 342.

in kin 22, 42, 543.

Demoniac, the attributes of the 451.

their nature 455.

their faith 456.

their normal attitude 458.

ignore the Supreme 462.

their fate 465.

Detractor, fate of a 171.

Desire 178.

its operation 179.

its control 181.

method of control of 181.

Desire-ridden, the 301.

Desperadoes *see* átatái.

Devás, meaning of 115.

mutual service of men and 118.

return of gifts to 122.

worship of 301, 355, 477.

Devata *see* Devas.

Devotee, attributes of a 401.

the knowing 350.

of the two, who superior 394.

Devotion, Yoga of 394.

unswerving 403.

Dharma 199, 202, 537.

Dhriti *see* fortitude.

Dhyana-Yoga *see* Yoga of meditation 257.

Divine Communion 100, 252.

Doctrine, of poise in action 63, 99.  
of self surrender 535.

Doubter, fate of a (*see* faith) 231, 324.

Duryodhan's estimate of opposing forces 8.

Dushkritám 201.

Duty, performance of one's duty the best, 176.

Faith, fate of a man without 231, 324.

threefold 473.

Fasting 91, 224.

Fearlessness 445.

Field, the 406.

its modifications 407.

knower of the 405, 411.

Food, threefold 482.

Form, the Universal 370.

show your old 388.

Universal, not seen by mortal man before 389.

old, shown 391.

who can see the Universal 393.

Fortitude, threefold 519.

Gayatri 361, 364.

Gita, free man of the 253.

who studies the 542.

who hears the 542.

Glories divine 354.

Goal the Supreme 315, 436.

\*, whence; is heaven 333.



whose, is the Supreme 334.  
 God-consciousness 221.  
 God-knower 76, 247-49.  
 God-seeker, four classes of 297.  
 God-unioned self 249.  
 Godly, virtues of the 445.  
 Good and evil 246.  
 Gunas *see* qualities.  
 Gunateet marks of a 431.  
     conduct of a 431.  
 Gyan *see* knowledge.  
 Gyan-Yoga *see* Sankhya-Yoga.  
 Happiness, threefold 521.  
     true 272-74.  
 Happy man 250.  
 Hypocrisy 452.  
 Ideal Existence 204, 540.  
 Incarnation (*see* Avatar) 184, 189.  
 Janak, story of 136.  
 Karma *see* Action.  
 Karma-Yoga *see* Yoga of Action.  
 Krishna—  
     commences the teaching 41.  
     defines poised reason 87.  
     defines, stable being 89.  
     like Arjun in birth; but unlike  
         in knowledge 184.  
     model man, 165.  
     removes Arjun's confusion between  
         reason and action 104.  
     perfect man 186.  
     posts Arjun's chariot between

the armies 16.  
 • shows old form 391.  
     the problem before 38.  
     the soothing answer of 280.  
     warrior's attitude according to  
         61.  
     what he comes for 201.  
     why he comes 199.  
 Krishna's analysis of man's fall 92.  
     call to fight 48, 62, 170, 233,  
         313, 381.  
     final advice 535-36.  
     last question 542.  
     mission 201, 381.  
     summing up of Sankhya teach-  
         ing 63.  
     view of Avatarhood 197.  
 Krishna-state, modes of attainment  
     of 205.  
 Kritu 331.  
 Knowledge, what is true 408, 418.  
     highest 422.  
     of self, nature and the Supreme  
         286.  
     threefold 511.  
     and Yoga 232.  
 Knowledge-sacrifice 225.  
 Kshatriya, duty to wage righteous  
     war, 60.  
     defined 524.  
 Kshetra *see* field.  
 Kshetra-yajna *see* field 405, 411.

- Kuru-conches 11.  
     generals 7.  
 Kurus, conch effect on 13.  
     doomed 379.  
 Liberation 308.  
     path of 206.  
     seekers of 499.  
 Mahavir 159.  
 Mahrishis, seven *see* Progenitors.  
 Man, an imitating animal 139.  
     composite of cognition, feeling  
         and will 403.  
     highest state of 221.  
     measure of his needs 123.  
 Manus four 348.  
 Maya of qualities 293.  
     what is 295.  
 Mimansiks 74.  
 Mind control 274, 277.  
 Mohammad—self surrender to God  
     148.  
     and idolatory 148.  
     and interest 157.  
     and Islamic brotherhood 153.  
     • and peace of Al Hodeibia 157.  
     and principle of equality 149.  
     and religious fanaticism 154.  
     and *shariat* 156.  
 Muni 89, 259.  
 Nature activity rooted in 244.  
     in perpetual flux 59.  
     two forms of My 286.  
     Unmanifest 317.  
 Nirvana *see* divine communion.  
 Niyat-Karma *see* action (duteous)  
     109, 110, 136.  
 Non-action, what is 218.  
 Non-actionness 106.  
 Non-violence 449.  
 Pandava Generals 6.  
 Pandit 42, 247.  
 Path of liberation 206.  
     of bondage 207.  
     the lord's 212.  
     devayana, pitriyana 319.  
 Perfection 107, 524.  
     the key to 175, 526.  
 Prahlad 359.  
 Prakriti *see* nature.  
 Praja 113.  
 Prajapati *see* Creator 113.  
 Pranayam 223.  
 Progenitors 347.  
 Purushottam *see* Supreme Self 442.  
 Qualities, the three 423.  
     the maya of 293.  
 Rakshasas 356, 477.  
 Raj 424.  
 Reason (poised) attainment of 90,  
     52.  
     defined 87.  
     illustrated by similies 97.  
     marks of 90.  
     threefold 516.

Renunciation 106.

and Yoga same 258.

essence of 502.

of action 235, 503.

of action impossible 108, 507.

threefold 504.

Rudras 356.

Sacrifice *see* Yajna.

Sadhus 162, 201, 481.

Sankhya and Yoga same 238.

Sankhya-Yoga 41, 105.

Sannyas defined 502 (*see* renunciation).

Sannyasi defined 236, 257.

Sat 499.

bhava 500.

Satva 423.

Self and body relation 57.

alone not spectator 509.

a spectator within the body 243.

a wonder 60.

and nature 414.

defined 438.

does not create agency, activity or union of action to fruit 244.

does not take imprint of actions 246.

doubting 231.

God-unioned 249.

in tune with the Infinite 252.

is stainless 420.

nature of 49, 438.

nature and the Supreme 286, 441.

not disintegrated with the body 44.

relation of, with other men 42.

unaffected by the elements 46, 57.

the Supreme 439, 441.

Self-abiding, the happy man 250.

Self-culture 259.

Self-illuminated, the 298.

Self-knower 247.

Self-reveller 134.

Self-realisation, *see* attainment.

Yoga essential for 229.

Self-surrender 535.

whom to relate the doctrine of 539.

Sense enjoyments, nature of 249.

mastery, peace through 95.

reveller 132.

slavery, disquiet through 96.

Senses, power of 91.

Service mutual, of men and devas 118.

of men *inter se* 120.

Shankaracharya 159.

identity of self and Supreme 159.

- effect of caste on his doctrine 160.
- Shastra, meaning of 470.
- Shastra-vidhi 472.
- Shudra 342, 524.
- Sidhi *see* perfection.
- Supreme (the) enjoyer etc. 255.  
attitude towards beings 340.  
and creation 326.  
beneficent 331.  
centre 377.  
establishes relations between the two forms 287.  
His manifestations 289.  
how attained after death 313.  
how to attain 529.  
qualities of beings from 347.  
origin of three states 294.  
two forms of His nature 286.  
Self, 439, 442.  
Unmanifest 318.  
Creator aspect of 395.
- Summing up of the teaching 534.
- Swadha 331.
- Synthesis, the final 441.
- Tam 425.
- Tanu 302.
- Tap *see* austerity.
- Tat 497, 499.
- Teaching (the) 170.  
leads to liberation 171.
- Teaching by example 167.
- Truth, a knower of 241.
- Tyaga, three kinds of 504 (*see* renunciation).
- Tyagi, a true 506.
- Understanding, threefold (*see* reason) 516.
- Universe, the wheel of 130.  
why it revolves 131.  
man's place in the wheel of 132.
- Untouchable (the) 343.
- Upanishad, Brihad-Aranyak 116, 287, 300, 367.  
Chhandogya 365-66.  
Katha 69, 365.  
Mandukya 365.  
Taitreya 366.
- Vaishnava Saints and idolatory 162.  
its effect, on *sadhus* and *mahants* 162.
- Vaishya defined 524.
- Vasudeva 300, 361, 545.
- Vasus 356.
- Vedas, karma-kanda section 74, 76.
- Vikarma 217.
- Vibhuti *see* glories.
- Virat-rup *see* form (Universal).
- Vision, gift of divine 371.  
Arjun's 578.
- Vyas 361, 545.
- War, cause of Mahabharat 1.
- Worship, misguided 335.

- mode of 345.  
 true 338.  
 of devas 207, 301, 335, 477.  
 who allowed to 341.
- Yajñ, meaning of 110, 114.  
 five 125.  
 for attainment 221.  
 threefold 484.  
 vedic 503.
- Yoga, of Action 106.  
   essential for realisation 229.  
   and knowledge essential for liberation 232.  
   better than renunciation 236.  
   and Sankhya are same 238.  
   gives quicker result 239.
- Yoga of devotion *see* devotion.
- Yoga of Equanimity, defined 81, 83.  
   its value 84.  
   conditions of attainment of 85.
- Yoga of meditation 257.  
   attitude in 261.  
   how to attain 264.  
   moderation all round 271.  
   posture 268.  
   practice 274.  
   seat 266.  
   state 272-73.  
   yields true happiness 272.
- Yoga-fallen, state of 280.
- Yogi, contrasted with ordinary man 243.  
   defined 257.  
   devoted to Me the best, 283.  
   in action 242.  
   marks of a 275.  
   superior to all 282.  
   the highest 276.
- Yukt 262, 272.
- Zoroaster 144.





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